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MENNONITE SETTLEMENT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Table of Contents.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Illustrations.....	iv
Chapter	

1. Introduction

Explanation of Study.....	1
Nature of Study.....	2
Methodology.....	4
Summary of Chapter Contents.....	5

2. Literature Review

History of the German-Russian Mennonites.....	7
Technological and Ideological Aspects of the American Farming Settlement.....	15
Cultural Implications on the Landscape.....	21

3. Methodology

Site Selection.....	25
Data Collection.....	27
Analysis of Data.....	31

4. Analysis of a Mennonite Settlement

Village and Farmstead Layout in Russia.....	35
Village and Farmstead Layout in 1874.....	34
Village and Farmstead Layout from 1880 - 1890.....	36

TABLE OF CONTENTS-cont.

Chapter

4. Overall Landscape and Farmstead Layout from 1890 - 1900's.	106
5. Conclusion	
Results of the Study.....	125
Summary.....	127
Further Research.....	130
References.....	132
Bibliography.....	138

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LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
2.1	Area Map of the Vistula River, Prussia.....	10
2.2	Angle Farmyard.....	11
2.3	Cross-Shaped Farmyard.....	12
2.4	Settlement Along the Chortitza River and the Molotschna River.....	15
2.5	A German-Russian Farmstead.....	25
2.6	Map of the Topeka, Atchison, & S.F. Railroad Land in 1874 near Marion Center.....	31
2.7	The Marion-McPherson branch of the railroad...	32
2.8	The Twine Binder Reaper.....	37
2.9	The Steam Engine.....	41
3.1	Village of Gnadenau.....	57
4.1	Conceptual Layout of Gnadenau.....	61
4.2	Area Map of the Crimea.....	67
4.3	The German-Russian Mennonite Farmstead.....	71
4.4	Area Map of Marion County and the South Cottonwood.....	75
4.5	Land ownership in relation to the River.....	86
4.6	Gnadenau and the Cottonwood River.....	88
4.7	Gnadenau, Marion Center, and Peabody.....	89
4.8	Area Map of Gnadenau and Hoffnungstal.....	90
4.9	The Gnadenau Trail.....	91
4.10	The Loda Wagon.....	92
4.11	Section 11, Risley Township, Marion Co.....	93
4.12	Numbered sections of Gnadenau Village.....	95

LIST OF FIGURES - cont.

4.10	The Zerrei.....	97
4.14	A Floor Plan of a German-Russian Dwelling.....	98
4.15	The Farmstead Layout in 1874.....	100
4.16	The Threshing Stone.....	101
4.17	Land Holdings in 1885.....	104
4.18	Jacob Friesen's Grist Mill.....	105
4.19	The Change in Land Ownership from 1874 to 1885.....	106
4.20	Peter Barkman's Homeplace.....	108
4.21	Orientation of the Granary on the Farmstead.....	110
4.22	Relocation of the Church in 1897.....	111
4.23	Orientation of the Flower Garden on the Farmstead.....	115
4.24	The Vineyard on the Farmstead.....	116
4.25	The Orientation of the Orchard.....	118
4.26	The Enclosed Farmyard.....	120
4.27	The Two-Story Frame House.....	121
4.28	Centralization of the Farmstead.....	122

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Explanation of Study

Since people have dwelled on the earth, they have modified the landscape to some degree. It is this act of modifying the landscape, the combination of dwelling and the natural landscape that becomes a cultural landscape. As Norberg-Schulz (1984) explains, it is an environment where man has found his meaningful place within the totality. People dwell when they are able to make their world concrete in buildings and other objects. Through these visible objects in the landscape people are able to identify themselves within the whole. This identification gives people a basis for belonging and orientation and enables them to know their place and how they are situated on the land.

A place is created by human beings for human purposes. Every row of trees or houses originally existed as an idea, which was then made into tangible reality (Tuan, 1974). Every object placed in the landscape by people explains how they view their world. All people consider their existence differently and that is manifested upon the natural landscape of which they dwell.

It is important to study the cultural landscape since it is a tangible manifestation of human actions and beliefs set within the natural environment. Through the observation and recording of the continuum of land-use and landscape modification which is evident in a particular cultural landscape, one can observe changes in human beliefs, available technologies and forces external to those cultural groups who are primarily responsible for the cultural landscape. The cultural landscape is also a dynamic system. Architectural styles, farming practices and transportation systems all change, reflecting different human needs and purposes. It is for these reasons that it is vital to study the cultural landscape and to understand how people situate themselves. The land reflects those changes as it is shaped and reshaped over time (Melnick, 1984).

Nature of the Study

In this study, I will analyze how the German-Russian Mennonites have expressed their place in the Arkansas Valley of Central Kansas. The Mennonites have always been known for their stewardship of the land. They have had to settle in many different lands, however, they have always been able to create a prosperous farming community on land that to many people seemed barren. As a result of religious persecution, the Mennonites have tended to gather with

others of their own beliefs and language. The Mennonites have also been viewed, by others, with suspicion because of their religious beliefs. Therefore, they have a tendency to remain in groups and to rely upon each other instead of going out into the surrounding community. They are contented to remain separate from the surrounding community and devote themselves to caring for the land.

Adaptation and modification of the Great Plains landscape will be examined in the light of the characteristics and qualities of the Mennonite culture. The Mennonites have a strong sense of the past, however they have dramatically changed their farming practices and have changed the landscape in order to productively compete in the present day economy. Although the landscape of the central Kansas plains is such that farms can be increased in size with few natural boundaries to impede expansion, the Mennonites continue to maintain a landscape that exhibits characteristics associated with a stewardship that portrays a feeling of care for the land. Through an analysis of settlement changes it is anticipated that the agents of change will be determined by cultural and technological influences. A fusion of these influences should provide us with a picture of the Mennonite landscape.

The scope of this study will include an examination of the initial German-Russian Mennonite settlement of 1874 up to the early 1900's. The early 1900's were chosen as the concluding date for this study because most of the settlement changes had occurred by 1910. Also, by this time the children of the first immigrants have bought the farm from their fathers or have taken charge of the farm and the parents have moved into town.

Methodology

In order to perceive the changes that have occurred in the landscape and in the settlement patterns of the Mennonites, I employed Robert Melnick's criteria for identifying rural historic districts (Melnick, 1984). His choice of components to identify the integrity of a historic district also pertain to my study. These components that create a cultural landscape consist of circulation patterns, vegetation, farmstead layout, overall layout of the area, and land use. Through an examination of the change in land ownership, the arrangement of the structures contained in the farmstead, the various circulation patterns of the area, boundary demarcation, vegetation and the response to the natural features, there will be an understanding of how the Mennonites have made their place in this area of Kansas.

The resources employed for data collection include county atlases, county records, written documentation, photographs, and interviews. By incorporating all five types of sources and comparing them with each other, a clearer picture of the settlement should be possible. As with all research there is the question of reliable and accurate information. Most of my information is based on written documentation and the county atlases. The interviews are also an important part of the study, though there were only eight informants that were able to supply me with information concerning the past history of the individual farms and settlement. Since this study involves descriptions of places and elements that occurred so many years ago, there are few people still living that can remember what the settlement looked like. In most cases the informants seemed to remember their "homeplace" quite well. Martin (1980) in his study found that the informants usually could remember the past as far back as to their grandparents. Many times the older people can remember the past more than the present. As Allen remarks, oral communication can "supplement written records, second can complement what has been documented in formal history and third, it can provide information about the past that exists in no other form" (Allen, 1981). These eight interviews were able to supply me with information that could not be found through other

resources. The material from the interviews was also used a complement to information already gathered in written documentation.

Summary of Chapter Contents

Chapter Two, the literature review, includes the history of the Mennonites and their settlements from their beginnings in Holland, to settlement in Russia, and the emigration from Russia to the United States. There is a discussion of the American farming scene before the arrival of the German-Russian Mennonites in Kansas and the innovations that occurred in farming technology. Finally, there is a review of research that has been done in cultural landscape.

Chapter Three is a description of the methodology used to achieve the objectives of this research.

Chapter Four describes in detail four stages of settlement of the German-Russian Mennonites in Kansas and the changes that have occurred through the years of settlement.

Chapter Five is a concluding discussion concerning the way in which the German-Russian Mennonites have expressed themselves in the landscape. The reasons for changes in settlement through the years is also examined. Finally there

is a discussion on the importance for studying cultural landscapes and recommendations for further research are mentioned.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORY OF THE GERMAN-RUSSIAN MENNONITES OF CENTRAL KANSAS

Dutch Settlement

Historically, the Mennonites have been farmers, their roots anchored to the soil, and their heritage rural and their character traits rural. (Stucky, 1959). The Mennonites, who are the subject of this study can trace their beginnings to the Netherlands, a country of lowlands recaptured from the sea through the use of dikes and canals. Lowland farming became a way of life with these people who could live on small farms and practice dairying. (Wiebe, 1967). These industrious farmers turned marshes into productive farmland and they would have been content to pursue this agricultural way of life, if their religious convictions had not become a source of discrimination and persecution.

Beginning in the 1530's and lasting until the end of the century, Evangelical Christianity was the dominant religion of the Netherlands. These farmers of the lowlands were known as Anabaptists. They believed in rebaptism and adult baptism and were therefore persecuted for their

opposing religious beliefs. In 1537 a former priest, George Simons, joined this group of believers. He became an outstanding leader of their cause. Soon the Anabaptists became known as Hennists which later became Mennonites.

The Mennonites preached regeneration, refused the oath and participation in warfare, rejected infant baptism and held to the separation of church and state. Many died for their faith and because of the severe persecutions which they suffered, many fled to other countries. Prussia was one of the countries that offered refuge to these people. At this time the Prussian government was looking for good farmers to drain and cultivate the swampy regions along the Vistula River (see Figure 2.1) and reclaim this area into productive agricultural land. (Wiebe, 1967). The Dutch Mennonite farmers had, for generations, learned and practiced the skill of retrieving land from the water so this undertaking along the Vistula River would not be radically different from the land reclamation processes which they had used in the Dutch lowlands.

Settlement along the Vistula River

Economically and culturally different from the Prussians, the Dutch Mennonites were accustomed to the Dutch pattern of farmstead layout. The Dutch pattern typically had the dwelling, barn and shed under one roof and each family settled on their own individual plot of land along

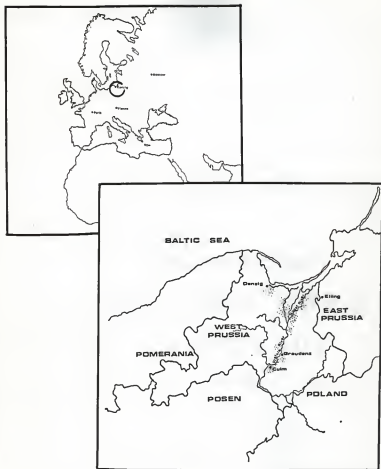


Figure 2.1 . Area map of the Vistula River and the Nogat River of Prussia. The Mennonites from the Netherlands converted the swampy regions into productive farm land.

the river. The Germans, however, lived in a village: the dwelling, barn and shed were separate. With the immigration of the Mennonites the prevailing pattern of settlement was altered. The Mennonites settled along the Vistula River, with each family living on their own parcel of land. They also retained their Dutch pattern of housing (Krahn, 1948).

Because many of the farms were located below sea level, great care had to be taken to site the barns and houses above high water. To create these locations above high water, earth had to be hauled from a considerable distance to elevate the buildings. Due to this, farms tended to be small consisting of forty-five acres or less, with the dwelling house, stables and barn built together in a row under one roof. The Mennonite Encyclopedia (1947) discusses that in the case of larger farms this "row" would become too long and waste too much land for the approach, therefore an "angle" farmyard was developed, in which the dwelling house and stable were in one row and a barn, approximately the same length, was built at a right angle to the main structure (figure 2.2). The farmyard was located within this angle and the exit road led around the barn. This road also served as the exit, the rear exit from the barn, and the exit for the manure pile which was located at the opposite side of the stable (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1947).



Figure 2.2 . The angle farmyard on farms consisting of forty-five acres or less.

When the farm size exceeded one hundred and twenty-five acres, the farmstead layout became cross-shaped (figure 2.3). In this layout the barn was built crosswise to the stable and attached on both sides, creating a short-cut route for hauling the hay and straw from the barn to the stable. This type of farmyard layout corresponds closely to the layout of the farms of the 1940's. (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1947).

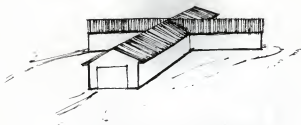


Figure 2.3 . The cross-shaped farmstead of farms larger than 125 acres.

The German landlords were well satisfied with these immigrants because of their knowledge of dikes and dams. As a result, many Mennonites were able to come into complete possession of some of the lands that they had been leasing. The settlements spread across the swamp lands of the Vistula and Nogat deltas and up the river (Refer to figure 2.1). By the end of the century there were many prosperous communities. In fact in 1608, the bishop of Culm complained that the whole delta was overrun by Mennonites (Smith, 1950). The earliest colonies were confined for many years to the country districts for foreigners. Although the Mennonites were welcomed to unproductive swamps and pest infected wastes they were not wanted in the city. In 1755 the citizens of Elbing complained that the Dutch Mennonite

laborers were taking the bread out of the mouths of the natives. Following this the King ordered the Mennonites to leave Elbing. The Mennonites began to come into other cities and with the difference in religious beliefs and their prosperous ways, the residents of these other cities complained that foreigners had never been able to trade in Prussian cities. The Mennonites' rights to trade were denied upon the complaints of the locals and they were again asked to leave (Smith, 1950).

In the Danzig area of Germany, the Mennonites were able to form a separate cultural and economic unit. However, by 1750 the Dutch language had been completely abandoned and Low German became the common language of the group. High German was spoken in worship and political intercourse (Krahn, 1948). This shift in language was the beginning of the Mennonite's assimilation into the surrounding landscape. Also at this time some religious principles were lost. Although the Mennonites remained in closed communities, they were beginning to be influenced by outside forces.

The Mennonites became very prosperous farmers. This prosperity created a feeling of jealousy on the part of the of the native Prussians. Also the Mennonites's retention of Low German as a language along with the required High German of Prussia heightened the tensions between groups. By

maintaining the Low German, the Prussians believed that the Mennonites were not accepting their ways. In the middle of the 17th Century, the King, ignoring the promise of his predecessors, allowed the merchants of Danzig to close Mennonite shops and other places of business. However, the Mennonites could avoid this closure by the payment of a substantial sum of tribute money. Also, to be exempt from the military, a special exemption tax was levied upon the Mennonites in the middle of the 18th Century.

Under the reign of Frederick the Great (1740-1786), the different regions in which the Prussian Mennonites lived were united under one political rule. However, Frederick did not relish the idea of the Mennonites owning such large tracts of land and their opposition to the use of military force. Since he was bent on further expansion of his possessions, impressment became more necessary and military service more unpopular. The Mennonites were able to continue to do whatever they wished as long as they paid an annual sum of five thousand thaler for the support of the military academy at Culm. These conditions changed with Frederick's successor. The same provisions for military exemptions were retained however, further land acquisition was denied the Mennonites.

The Church and State were determined to stop the Mennonite expansion in the area. The military exemption privileges were rescinded, heavy taxes were levied upon them, they were not allowed to purchase land unless it was from another Mennonite and they were not to promote their religion outside of their group. Due to the conflict between remaining true to their religious beliefs and the restrictions placed upon them by the Prussian government, several thousand Mennonites left their homes in Danzig and Prussia to escape "the world" and settle on the steppes of Russia (Krahn, 1948). After 200 years of residence in Prussia, the Mennonites were compelled to look elsewhere for a home if they wished religious freedom.

Invitation of Catherine the Great

Catherine the Great, in 1786, was looking for farmers to cultivate the steppes of Russia. This area of the southern steppes was characterized by rolling grasslands with trees which consisted mostly of oak, maple, elderberry and hawthorn found only in the ravines. The summers were hot and dry, the winters severe and springs short. The annual precipitation of the steppes was approximately 12-15 inches and there were great temperature fluctuations with an average humidity of 50-65%.

Catherine regarded agriculture as the backbone of national prosperity. In accordance with the economic theories of the time, she was very much interested in settling her unoccupied agricultural lands. She advertised throughout Europe offering very liberal inducements within a framework of a Privilegium (Toews, 1982). These privileges used to induce settlers to Russia, included free transportation and support until such time as the settlers should be established in their own houses, tax exemption for a limited time, exemption from military duty and certain civil obligations, religious toleration, wide liberty in establishing such educational and local political institutions as best suited their needs and 160 acres of free land.

These settlements that Catherine envisioned were to be seventy-five acres per family and were to be model farms that could not be divided but were to remain under the crown (Regier, 1945). Previously this land had not been productive and many farmers had failed. This area was inhabited by the nomadic Tartars who had no desire to settle in one location and farm so Catherine had to turn elsewhere for suitable colonists. Immigrants were offered 175-180 acres of land free. This amount of land was based upon the science of economics whose founders, Francois Quesnay of France and Adam Smith of England, decided that a grand

culture was defined through large scale farming. This type of farming was based on horses for power as opposed to oxen and employed an area of about 120-180 acres per farm unit. This size of an area was deemed suitable for both a profitable and efficient operation by one family.

Settlement on the Russian Steppes

An invitation, extended in 1786 through George Von Trappe, a Russian colonization agent of German extraction, was offered to some of the discontented citizens of the city of Danzig at the time of the first partitioning of Poland. Two representatives, Jacob Hoppner and Johann Bartsch, at Russian expense, were sent by the Mennonite churches to investigate the land being offered by the Russians. They journeyed throughout Russia and finally chose land similar to their fertile lowlands along the Vistula Delta.

When the first immigrants left for Russia they had to stay the winter at Dubovna due to the lateness of the season and renewed warfare between Russia and Turkey. They were settled in temporary shelters at the government expense and in the spring continued on their journey. Due to the Turkish wars however, they were unable to settle on the land chosen by their representatives but had to settle on land farther up the Dnieper River on a small tributary, the Chortitza (figure 2.4). This land was, through the eyes of



Figure 2.4 . The settlement of the Mennonites along the Chortitza River and the Molotschna River in the Ukraine.

the new colonists, a bare and hilly wasteland. Instead of seeing flat, fertile fields like their own beloved Vistula Delta, as the deputies had promised, they saw a wide, rocky, barren steppe cut through with deep gullies, filled at that season of the year with patches of dried-up grass. There was no sign of a living thing anywhere, much less of human habitation except for the ruin of a deserted palace, the remains of a ghost village erected by Potemkin some time before to impress the Empress with the growing prosperity of her new crown lands.

Some refused to unpack their goods, hoping that the Russian government might relent and offer them more promising land. Others were more optimistic, including the two deputies, who upon pronouncing the land good began unpacking their possessions. The Russian government was supplying these colonists with building material for shelter. However, the shipment was late so the colonists built crude sod shanties that were partly below the ground and had thatched roofs resembling a tent. Others remained in their wagons. The two deputies having money, were able to build more secure buildings. Some settlers had to be cared for during the following winter in the nearby government barracks at Alexandrovsk. These first immigrants' beginning was not at all promising and from the start was difficult.

When the Mennonites first settled on the steppes they encountered many difficulties. They were accustomed to the fertile lowlands of Prussia and suddenly on the Russian steppes they had to deal with drought conditions, less vegetation, grasshopper infestations, and marauding Tartars. In addition to acclimatizing themselves to these new conditions, the German government was forbidding anyone who owned land to emigrate. Therefore, only those people who were landless moved. Since these first immigrants had no land to sell in Prussia, they immigrated without any money to buy equipment for the new land and they also had very few possessions. Later on, other Prussian Mennonites were able to sell their land, emigrate and settle on the steppes with greater success due to having possessions or money to buy the necessary equipment to farm. These settlers were able to succeed and become prosperous farmers. By allowing the perpetuation of a self-contained community, the Mennonites were assured of homogeneity within their group. Eventually the Mennonites began forgot the old ways they had in Prussia and began to learn Russian agriculture. The land prevented them from farming as they had in Prussia. Economically, it was both a competitive and individualistic challenge of the virgin lands as the Mennonites set out to make their livelihood in the new land (Toews,1982).

These immigrants settled in the area along the Dnieper River and formed one colony called Chortiza or Old Colony. Another colony was later formed on the Molotschna River and became the Molotschna Colony. The Molotschna group will be the focus of this research. It is from this colony that groups emigrated to settle in Central Kansas in the Arkansas Valley in 1874. Chortiza was the first colony to be settled. Then in 1803, the Molotschna Colony was founded with settlers who were more experienced farmers and had brought their own implements, possessions, and money with them from Prussia. The government allowed them to create an entirely homogenous community and their German Mennonite culture and economic life were able to become fully developed (Krahn, 1944). They were exempt from military service and Catherine the Great allowed them the right to retain their own governing body for the villages. They maintained their Low German language and did not allow the Russian language to be taught in their schools.

The Mennonites learned from many years of intolerance and persecution to live in the remote countryside accepting land that was considered to be less desirable (Winfield, 1949). This, however, proved to be beneficial for they learned early that to survive on poor land they needed unceasing application of energy and extra-ordinary ingenuity to buildup the soil fertility. At first, the barren steppes

predetermined the Mennonite agriculture. Until the mid-nineteenth century, highly innovative farming was not characteristic of Mennonite agriculture operations due to the lack of markets, fluctuating demands, drought, periodic depletion of herds by disease and an absence of development capital (Toews, 1982). The Mennonite agriculture consisted of cattle, flax, tobacco and silk industries. It was a broad based type of agriculture but conservative. This diversity of crops, however was a key to their survival in stressful times. In later years, to produce the best results, the Mennonites became more innovative in their farming methods. These farmers were, in fact, the first in Europe to adapt new methods of fertilizing the land, of feeding cattle and planting new crops. (Winfield, 1949).

The pioneering conditions were such, that large scale grain production was impossible and the distance to market made it unprofitable. Instead of crop production being the major occupation, stock raising became predominant. Sheep raising, which was prevalent, reached it's peak in 1836-1841, and then began to decline. In the early nineteenth century there was one shepherd per village to tend all the village sheep. He would take the entire flock to a village meadow that could encompass up to five hundred acres. Sheep raising demanded larger tracts of land and this began to cause trouble. Because of the unavailability of land

ownership due to an increase in the population many of the poorer class were unable to obtain land. Therefore in the 1860's, after many years of discontent among this class, the larger tracts of land held for sheep grazing were redistributed in smaller units. The larger estates were divided into half and even quarter estates and surplus common land was distributed in the form of small farms. Cattle breeding then became popular for it was of greater economic value, longer duration, and required less acreage.

The Mennonites settled in villages on the steppes for protection against the marauding tribes. They still retained the Dutch house with the dwelling, barn and shed still under one roof. Although they brought with them the Dutch styled house, they accepted the traditional Russian stove into their homes. The Russian stove uses grass for fuel and is capable of heating the entire house. Since the fuel for these stoves is grass, there was always an abundant supply on the steppes. The typical Mennonite farm of the Molotschna Colony consisted of the house and garden plot of 6 acres, orchards and other trees were contained in 2.5 acres, pasture and meadows were 46 acres and arable land was that remaining acreage of 120 acres (Mennonite Encyclopedia, 1947). The village layout consisted of the homes and farmyards situated on both sides of a wide village street with the orchard in the back and the gardens were in

the front (Figure 2.5). The fields were immediately behind each house and extended a considerable distance in a long strip. Using this method of farming, the farmer did not have far to go to bring produce home.

In the first decade of settlement, land in the immediate neighborhood of the village was used for grazing purposes only. Wheat, oats, potatoes, flax and vegetables were raised on distant fields of not more than 14-27 acres per farm (Krahn, 1955). Drought made crop production risky and the Mennonites had not yet acquired the farm machinery necessary for larger scale farming.

The Mennonites as a group had always been good farmers. Yet one individual, Johann Corines, had a significant influence on the way the Mennonites farmed and greatly advanced their farming techniques. When he first bought his estate in the Molotschna Colony the land was barren. By 1845 there were 35 acres of shade trees, 16 acres of fruit trees and a large nursery. Within 20 years, 5 million trees had been planted in the 47 villages of the Molotschna Valley (Krahn, 1955). As early as 1819, it was recorded by two travelling Quakers in that area, that "as a country it is so bare and open..(the Mennonites).. have planted rows and hedges of trees so as to shelter the garden as they grow up.." (Smith, 1830). There was a nursery that

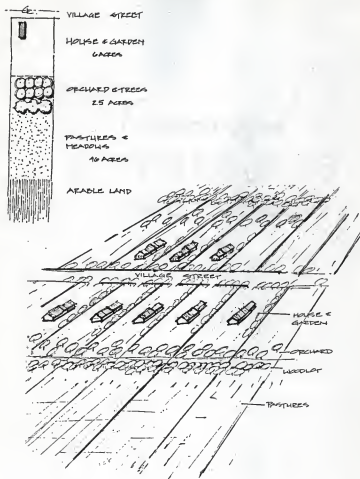


Figure 2.5 . Layout of a German-Russian Mennonite farm of the Molotschna Colony.

consisted of forest and fruit trees - apples, pear, cherry, mulberry, for the supply of neighboring colonist. During this time, the Association for the Improvement of Agriculture was established. Cornies became the lifelong chairman and was the soul of the organization. He made it obligatory for the entire Molotschna Colony to summer fallow some of their land. Simultaneously there was the introduction of the following rotation of crops: summer fallow, barley, wheat and rye. These new methods of farming were soon followed by increased yields and the impact of drought cycles was decreased. Also under the supervision of the Agricultural Association, orchards and groves were planted and flower gardens were encouraged. Cornies also planted an extensive forest on his estate proving that the climate and soil of the steppes were suitable for the vigorous growth of trees (Krahn, 1955).

The Mennonites and other German colonist were able to be distinct groups within the Russian empire due to the special privileges given to them by the Russian government. However, the idea of Russian nationalism began to increase in the 1860's and a Polish immigrants' revolt convinced the Russian empire that Russification was necessary for all of Russia and the colonies controlled by Russia. In 1870 a proclamation was sent throughout the country stating

that the colonists were to be governed directly from St. Petersburg. Russian was to be the official language of local government and was to be introduced as a subject in all schools. Also, the German schools were to be supervised directly by the Russian educational authorities and military exemption was to be abolished. (Smith, 1950). The colonists were to be given ten years in which to accommodate themselves to the new order. After that time, they would be full fledged Russian citizens with no special favors.

Immigration to a New Land

Realizing that the government was not going to rescind any of the 1871 proclamation, the Mennonites began to look elsewhere for a home. In the summer of 1873 a delegation representing the various communities of the Mennonites population in South Russia, Polish Russia and Prussia visited land in Manitoba, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Nebraska and Kansas. They visited these areas with a four fold purpose: 1) To locate cheap, fertile land, 2) To obtain assistance in transportation, 3) To determine whether they could enjoy religious freedom and be exempt from military services, and 4) to establish their right to live in closed communities with their own German schools and local self-government (Bailes, 1959). They investigated the soil and climate, the available satisfactory lands, inquired about the political conditions and military regulations. The

United States Government did not say that there would be a guarantee of military exemption but that there was little possibility that anyone would be called upon to serve in the army if that was contrary to one's religious convictions. This delegation returned to Russia late in the summer to report what they had found in the various areas. The more liberal Molotschna representatives, as well as the Hutterites, recommended the United States in spite of the fact that there was no guarantee for military exemption.

C.B. Schmidt, a German speaking man who had come to America from Dresden, Germany, and who was a representative of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, showed the delegates land in Marion, McPherson, Harvey, Reno, and Butler counties and gave them strong inducements to settle in these areas owned by the railroad. He also, as head of the immigration department, travelled to Russia in the early winter of 1874 to encourage the Mennonite's immigration to Kansas (Janzen, 1914).

In 1874, the villagers of Annenfeld in the Crimean area, left Russia to find a new home in the United States. Once in the United States they remained with a group of Mennonites already settled in Elkhart, Indiana while the leader of the group, Elder Wiebe and another, travelled west to investigate land. C.B. Schmidt, the German speaking

Santa Fe agent, showed them his lands in Kansas. The terrain of gentle hills, valleys, and streams reminded them of their homes in Russia. Although they had seen the scars of plagues, droughts, and empty homesteads, they decided to settle in Marion County in the Risley Township, on the land owned by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. This land was offered in alternate section at three dollars per acre. Elder Wiebe bought 12 sections, consisting of 7,680 acres of Risley Township, for his village with the south branch of the Cottonwood River traversing the tract (Figure 2.6). The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad Company was willing to transport the entire group at no cost if the German-Russian Mennonites bought railroad land and their destination was this area of Kansas. On August 17, 1874, in Risley Township, now known as Liberty Township, section 1, 3, 11, 13, and 15, belonged to the village, now called Gnadenau.

Settlement on the Kansas Prairie

This land in Marion County, Kansas, was rich black loam that was good for wheat, but not well adapted for corn. Water was found at depths of 20-30 feet depending on the location and was generally hard on account of the underlying limestone beds. One of the reasons for not settling in Nebraska was the great depth one had to dig to get to water.

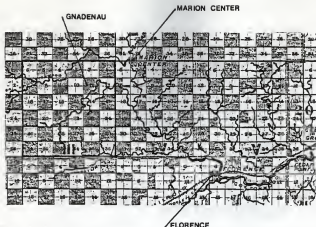


Figure 2.6 . Shaded sections showing the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad land. Odd numbered sections from 1 - 23 were bought by Elder Wiebe for his congregation.

Grass was three feet high when the settlers came in 1874-1876 and there were no trees to be seen anywhere except a few along the creek beds. The nearest town, Marion, was 10 miles east and Peabody was 14 miles southeast. In many ways this land was very similar to the land the immigrants had left. However, they were leaving well established farms with good crops and large trees that had been planted many years before on a barren treeless steppe.

In Kansas they found themselves again in a situation of starting with very little. To add to the difficulties, the Mennonites arrived just after a grasshopper infestation so everything that had been green was gone due to the grasshoppers (Pantle, 1947). Jacob Wiebe wrote in his diary

that "they built light board shanties, dug wells, in three weeks it began to rain; there came a heavy rain. We rented some plowed land from English neighbors, who lived on section 12 & 14...corn was high priced, there had been no crop that year. The first sowed wheat brought a bountiful harvest the next year" (Bradley, 1920).

In Gnadenau, the traditional village layout was retained and the pattern distribution the same as it was in Russia. All of the farmers lived adjacent to each other on a village street and had to travel to their distant fields which were parcelled out to them around the village. Sometimes they had to drive 1.5 to 2 miles to get to their fields. The village pattern was abandoned two years later due to the inconvenience of the distance to the fields and the type of land ownership pattern found in the United States. The village structure of landownership was semi-communal and laws in the United States demanded that each land owner have his own deed. It became easier for each villager to consolidate their own land instead of having it scattered in several sections. The village pattern continued to be practical for the Mennonites social, church and school activities. However, in later years, most of the communities political boundaries were decided by school districts.

When the villagers first settled this area they setup temporary shelters much like the shelters of the nomads on the steppes of Russia. Once settled, the immigrants built their adobe houses with the dwelling, barn, and shed under one roof. These houses were a continuation of the Dutch-style house that had been carried down through the generations. The Mennonites, also brought the Russian stove to the United States. On the Great Plains as well as on the steppes of Russia, grass was plentiful so there was an unlimited supply of fuel for cooking and heating the house.

The adobe houses were built of sun-dried bricks formed from molds that were brought over from Russia. In the early 1880's a traveller, Noble Prentis, toured the villages and described what he saw; wheat stacks were located at the back door with the flower garden at the end of the house in straight rows. Apricot, from seeds brought over from Russia, apple, cherry, peach, and pear trees in orchards, wheat and cornfields were unfenced but several acres around every house were set in hedges, orchards, lanes and alleys of trees. There were trees in lines, in groups and trees all alone (Prentis, 1889). Some of the plant material brought over from Russia with the Mennonites was the wild olive, mulberry and the red winter wheat which became so popular for its drought tolerant capacities. The mulberry was used for fuel, as a hedge and as a fruit tree. For awhile some

villages tried the silk worm industry but that did not prosper and was then abandoned. In Gnadenau and Hoffnungstal, a community of the remaining immigrants from Annenfeld, the houses were on the north side of the street with the gabled end of the house facing the street. Between the house and the street you would find flower beds and small orchards. The village was later divided into west and east halves and each had its own shepherd who looked after the cattle and the horses as was done in Russia. Each night the men would turn his horses out on the street and the village herder would take them all out to the prairie (Janzen, 1914).

The next group to arrive in Marion county in 1874 was the Alexanderwohl village from the same area of Russia in the Molotschna Valley. This group, consisting of 165 families, was much larger than the group which settled Gnadenau. These people lived in immigrant houses until they were able to build their houses or until the Santa Fe Railroad shipped the building materials for their frame houses.

This land of the Alexanderwohl Mennonites was more level than that of the Gnadenau settlement although it was just about five miles south. The land also had all of the good qualities of a fertile valley land and was superior to

the Russian steppes. Whereas the Gnadenau village and Hoffnungstal village built their first permanent homes of adobe, most of the Alexanderwohl group built frame houses. The Alexanderwohl group bought their homes from the railroad company and were immediately able to build the frame houses when they moved to their land. They also did not create a complete village pattern as the settlers in Gnadenau did. The houses were aligned in the village pattern but the people lived on their own land and there were no stores or tradesmen. When each new group of immigrants arrived in this area of Kansas, they would settle in communities that were not far from each other. Although each group of Mennonites had different beliefs they still remained in close proximity to the other Mennonites as they had in Russia.

When many of the farmers began moving out to their own land, they were reestablishing themselves in the world. In Russia success and prosperity reinforced autonomy and separation from the more backward surroundings. However, in America the Mennonites found that success and prosperity meant joining the mainstream of economic growth (Saul, 1974). When the Mennonites first moved to the United States, they wanted to maintain their distinctive and highly disciplined style of life. Part of the reason they left Russia was the threat of losing this community autonomy. However this

community autonomy was very different from the American style of democracy at that time, where freedom was oriented around the individual instead of the community. During the nineteenth century, the Jeffersonian ideal of the yeoman farmer was the epitome of American freedom. This ideal farmer was a rugged, self-sufficient individual, surrounded by his own land and isolated from the corruptions of towns and industry and was the backbone of the republic (Juhnke, 1974). The Mennonites, although industrious and having a wonderful feel for the land were not seeking this American ideal. They were wanting freedom to farm within the community as a whole and to have control both politically and religiously of their community. They tried for two years to live the way they had in Russia and to achieve this community separateness, however the village system broke down due to the American political organization and convenience of living on ones own land.

By 1895, members of the Gnadenau settlement had scattered over the landscape to their own farms. Hillsboro just north and west of the settlement had been established in 1879 when the Marion-McPherson branch of the railroad was built. As shown in Figure 2.7, this route created a trade center that was much more accessible to Gnadenau. The Mennonites were now able to bring their produce to this town and were not forced to travel the fourteen miles to Peabody



Figure 2.7. The establishment of the Marion-McPherson branch railroad created a new trade center for Gnadenau.

for the nearest railroad station in order to market their goods. By 1895, members of the village had settled on farms south and west of the village proper.

In the Old World, the social relationships stood on three institutional legs, the village, church congregation and the family. The village was the center of the local politics, however the Mennonites found that the village

pattern was inefficient as larger separate land holdings were made possible by their prosperity and the introduction of more efficient machinery (Juhnke, 1975). Because of these larger land holdings, the governing committee of three men which had made the village decisions regarding discipline, personal disputes and public improvements, could no longer exercise the authority that they had in Russia. Instead the American institution of local government that was based on arbitrary county and township boundaries governed all responsibilities that were formerly under village control. Gradually the entire village accepted the American constitution, the government and national traditions. Although the village tried at first to remain aloof from the host society, this did not continue for long and the American ideals became an image which was able to take the harshness out of the Anabaptist church-state dualism and blurred the Mennonite clarity about the evils of the outside world (Juhnke, 1975).

It seemed as though the railroad was the subject of the invasion. Many Mennonites fought the idea of having a branch of the Santa Fe from Marion to McPherson run through their town. Eventually the branch was laid down one mile north of the village and the town of Hillsboro was created. Since the railroad was still near the village, American influences were able to be introduced to the frontier. The

railroad that brought the Mennonite settlers to their land. introduced new farm equipment, building materials, and more non-Mennonites. In 1876 only twenty-six Mennonites had become naturalized, by 1906, 2500 had accepted the American way of life. They had not accepted the invitation to become naturalized as soon as residence required due to previous experiences with governments and also because of their church state doctrine which encouraged political non-involvement (Juhnke,1975). Up to 1914, the Mennonites were able to maintain a relatively closed German-American rural community. During W.W.I their German patriotism arose and the interwar period became a time of readjustment. They had to reestablish a role in the American society and politics due to their unacceptable W.W.I Germanism and pacifism. They became both Mennonite and American and in these two decades dropped most of the German culture and language. (Juhnke,1975). They were American now and did not want to be associated with Germany. Wedel wrote "A strong inclination toward change pervades the atmosphere in our country. The recent Mennonite immigrants have rapidly taken on the coloring of the American people in this respect. Time will tell whether the basic elements of the old original can be maintained within the manifold life styles of the new." (Juhnke,1975).

TECHNOLOGICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE AMERICAN FARMING SETTLEMENT IN THE CENTRAL KANSAS REGION

Settlement of the Prairie

The rural landscape in Kansas, before the arrival of the German-Russian Mennonites and other in 1874, was created by homesteaders. The homesteaders located a claim, marked it by the construction of four legs for a foundation to a cabin and then erected a board with their name on it (Zornow,1957). Since the land was already surveyed into the strict grid pattern, the immigrants were able to go to the land office and file a declaratory statement of an intent to homestead or pre-empt the quarter section.

In the eastern part of Kansas, log cabins averaging approximately ten feet by twenty feet at the foundation were the most common form of house. Dwellings in the 1850's consisted of log cabins built out of materials that were available on the ground (Malin,1944). The further west one went, however, the scarcer the trees and in many areas lumber had to be hauled such a distance that the price of it became prohibitive. Settlers in these areas built their houses of sod. In the town of Marion in 1872 there were scattered areas of log cabins and a few straggling stores. In later years, ready-cut houses of standard, simple patterns were offered by the railroad to buyers of railroad

land and were a type of early tract housing. The quality of the house and the quality of land in most cases of early settlement seemed to have no relationship. The embellishment of the house and the planting of the yard were often left to the second generation, both in town as well as the farm (Sauer,1977). During the period of initial settlement, few farmers thought of the farm as a permanent home, something that would be handed down through the generations. The farm was viewed as an investment to be improved upon and then sold. These early farmers were also more concerned with survival rather than "decorating" their property. Usually any extra money would be spent on farm equipment or necessities than on the house and the surrounding yard.

Following the Civil War there was an influx of settlers into the Kansas area. However, the depression of 1873 slowed down the immigration. The drought and grasshopper invasion which occurred in 1874 discouraged many of the settlers. A number of settlers left their fields and homes to live elsewhere (Zornow,1957). In August of 1874, when the Mennonites arrived from the Crimea, many of the early settlers had left or were very willing to sell their land to the new immigrants, therefore the Mennonites were able to obtain other land in addition to the railroad land they had bought earlier. The quarter section was the most popular

form of land ownership and although the rectangular pattern dispersed the farms, families were still part of a larger community. Though families may have been far apart, however, common customs, faith or speech brought the people together and they were able to maintain communities through good and bad times. The country church and the schools were especially important in maintaining the social connections for a community (Sauer, 1977).

The Influence of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad

The railroad played an important role in the settlement of the plains. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad had acquired 211,138.80 acres, all odd sections through a land grant. Under the provisions of this land grant, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe had to reach the Colorado State line within ten years or the grant would be forfeited (Wiebe, 1959). After nine years, only 127 miles of railroad had been laid with 285 more miles to be built in order to reach the state line. Until March of 1870, only twenty-eight miles from Topeka had been built and by August the line had been extended to Emporia, thirty miles farther. In order to retain the land grant, land sales had to be increased. While lines were being built, railroad land was being appraised and an intensive selling campaign was started that eventually reached Europe. The railroad

desired settlers who would remain on the land and make it productive. To entice this type of people the railroad offered low prices for the land and free shipping of material for those who bought their land. Eastern settlers had already been attracted to the land through the Homestead Act of 1864. Through contacts with some of these early settlers, who had friends and family living abroad, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad realized there was a great potential for interesting settlers and hard working farmers from Europe to settle on their land (Wiebe, 1959). It was through these other settlers that the railroad company had also learned that the Mennonite people were professional farmers that had both the capital and the knowledge necessary in order to survive successfully on the plains. These Mennonites, as well as other German-Russians, were actively sought after to buy railroad land in the United States for farming purposes.

Ideology of Settlement on the Prairie

From the 1870's to 1910, the prevalent concept was to subdue the prairie and create a garden from a desert (Stucky, 1959). Also within this period the Jeffersonian ideal of the yeoman farmer, a rugged self-sufficient individual surrounded by his land was very popular (Junke, 1974). Although the Mennonites believed in community

ownership rather than individual ownership, some of their ideals and the Victorian ideals and morals of mid-America coincided. Both believed in accumulation, however the Mennonites believed that accumulation of prosperous fields and flocks were the real prosperity and that is only obtained by steady accumulation (Saul,1974).

During early Kansas settlement, corn, spring wheat, and oats were the most important crops. Winter wheat gradually replaced spring wheat and by 1879 only 2% of the total wheat acreage was spring wheat (Zornow,1957). The variety of crops increased so that before 1900, rye, barley, buckwheat, broom corn, millet, timothy clover, orchard grass and blue grass were all being grown. The settlement of German-Russians in this area and in other parts of the plains maintained their German-Russian distinctiveness through the interaction between their culture and the subhumid environment (Baltensperger,1983). Since many of the German-Russians had lived on the steppes of Russia, they were accustomed to drought, grasshoppers and anything else the environment had to offer. In order to protect themselves from drought, they were already practicing crop diversity. Through their experimentation and reliance on a tradition of diversity, the German-Russians sought crops that were well adapted to the plains (Baltensperger,1983). Baltensperger's study of the Mennonites in Nebraska found that the

immigrants had a much more diverse farming operation than the so-called Americans. However, these farmers were also conscious of the economic side of farming and they accepted American farming techniques as being more productive than their own techniques. They were able to phase out crops that were not economically imperative and they were able to compromise between economic imperatives and traditional and ecological suitability. These people adopted the basic premises of a dominant economic system but did not abandon their traditional agricultural pattern, especially when the those traditional traits and practices were ecologically adaptive. The immigrants were more in tune to environmental realities and were able to accept more easily the agricultural adjustments undertaken in periods of environmental stress than the host society (Baltensperger,1983).

In 1875, 75% of all the farms in Menno and Meridian Townships in Marion County, Kansas were 100-174 acres and almost all of them were quarter sections (McQuillan,1978). By 1890, the agricultural settlement had passed the pioneer phase which consisted of a high degree of population mobility. All the land was taken and the opportunity for quick profits in land speculation was gone. During the 1870's to 1900 430 million acres of land was turned into farms. In 1887, however, there was a crash in the market due

to mounting drought. This affected many people who had invested too quickly during the "boom" period which was also accompanied by heavy mortgage debts. Many lost their farms at this time and in 1893-1896 there was another crop failure and another drop in market prices. The land had been settled, but now the farmers had to concern themselves with idea that larger acreage was necessary in order to productively complete with their neighbors.

Farm Technology and Its Impact on the Kansas Landscape

To be able to farm in this subhumid environment at this stage of development, large machines drawn by horses were essential and not just a convenience. The soil had to be worked quickly while moisture was sufficient and to conserve as much of that moisture as possible that was available. The economic solution to this situation was to increase machinery and horse power investment and reduce the labor charge, spreading the machinery cost over the larger number of acres (Malin, 1944).

In the 1880's, this area of Kansas used the twine-binder reapers pulled by horses, as shown in Figure 2.8. for cutting grain. The steam engines provided the power for the threshing machines (Figure 2.9). In the 1890's and 1900 s, the steam engine could cut approximately sixty acres per day. In 1912, the tractor was introduced and farming was

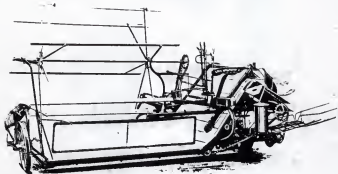


Figure 2.8 . The twine-binder reaper for cutting grain.
From American Tools by R. Douglas Hurt, 1982, Manhattan,
Kansas:Sunflower University Press.

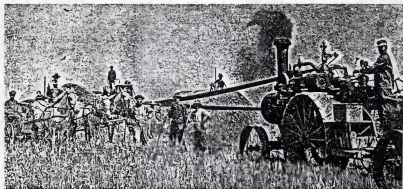


Figure 2.9 . The steam engine used for threshing from header
stacks. From "A Changed Community" by Daniel J. Classen,
1951,Mennonite Life, 63.

greatly changed. After World War I the number of draft animals declined, thus reducing the amount of acreage necessary for their feed. The farmyard structures changed, and the farm size increased continuously. The field layout also began to change with the introductions of machinery for "mechanical equipment encourages an artificial topography" (Jackson,1977). This equipment required large smooth areas to work properly, thus any unevenness or irregularities in the ground were smoothed out. By 1914, the farm population began to decline absolutely. Instead of farmers moving to other land, they were now moving off the land (Schlebecker, 1975).

During the period between 1895 and 1905, the number of farms less than ninety-nine acres declined substantially while the number of quarter section farms increased and farms larger than 175 acres increased considerably (McQuillan,1978). The small farm was being squeezed out while the use of farm machinery was increasing. The direct relationship between people and the environment was being altered. Instead of the farmers being closer to the ground they were being separated because of the machinery between them. The farmers were becoming manipulators of the activities on the farm instead of relying on the resources of God (Stucky, 1959).

Fencing

With the great influx of settlers and farmers mixing with ranchers the question of retaining livestock became an issue. The Herd Law which was put into effect in 1872 remained as law until 1880 when it was no longer necessary. During this time,

any person planting an osage orange or hawthorn fence or building a stone fence the height of four and a half feet high around any field within ten years from the passage of this act and successfully growing and cultivating the same until it successfully resist the stock, could receive an annual bounty of two dollars for every forty rods (660 feet) (Muilenburg,1975).

In 1874, there were few fences noticed, however by 1878, all types of fences such as stone, rail, board, wire, and hedge were being used. At first there were more rods of hedge than any other type of fencing. By 1880 wire for which no bounty was offered had began to be in more demand and barbed wire was almost used exclusively by the 1890's, although it had not been sanctioned in Kansas until 1883 (Muilenburg,1975). In 1883, however, a quarter of the land was still open range (Van Meter,1972).

Crops

Before 1900 the crops that were grown were wheat, corn, oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, broom corn, millet, timothy, clover, orchard grass, and blue grass (Van Meter,1972). The 1870's saw an increase in sweet sorghum which might have

been an influence of the Mennonites. They had grown sorghum in Russia to make molasses and had continued planting it in the United States. In 1881 there were five sugar mills in operation in Kansas (Malin,1944). By 1890, however, grain sorghum was more valuable for livestock feed and less often used for making syrup. In 1899, 907 acres were planted to sorghum for syrup and sugar with 9,240 acres planted for forage and grain (Van Meter,1972). Corn was not quite as popular as it had been as wheat was beginning to compete in popularity. With the evolution of machinery, wheat was found to be particularly adaptable to riding machinery while corn growing still required hand harvesting, husking, and cutting (Malin,1944). Farmers were all wanting machinery they could ride on, instead of walking the fields.

Along with the other settlers the Mennonites vigorously participated in the agricultural revolution in the 1800's. To most of the Mennonites, farming was their life and their farm was passed down through the generations. They were concerned with making the farm their permanent home. The planting of trees was for them a high priority, both in Russia and the United States. They had brought across the ocean the mulberry and Russian olive seeds along with fruit tree seeds such as apricot and peach, as well as the sunflower and watermelon seeds for their gardens. The Mennonites were prepared to create a home similar to the one

they left in Russia. Settlers from the eastern United States also tried to reproduce their earlier homes on the Kansas landscape. The German-Russian Mennonites however, had come from an environment similar to the Kansas one. They were accustomed to the climatic changes that could occur on the prairie and had plants that were adapted to the sometimes harsh environment that the prairie had to offer. The settlers from the east however had left a humid environment for a subhumid one. All the settlers, no matter how different their environment was from their previous home, would essentially try to follow the familiar pattern of their old environment.

CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS ON THE LANDSCAPE

Much has been written about the way people settle upon the landscape. By examining settlement patterns, landuse patterns, elements within the landscape such as vegetation and fences, structures and the relation of the structures to each other, people explain their existence within the landscape. Through the study of these components in the landscape there is an understanding of the way people settle and how they view themselves within their environment.

Landuse Patterns

The geographers, Jordan and Rowntree have studied rural settlement patterns to show that cultural groups settle on the landscape differently although they are in similar landscapes. They may form tightly clustered villages on the one extreme to fully dispersed farmsteads on the other (Jordan & Rowntree, 1982). Another researcher that has done studies of settlement patterns of various cultural groups is Vogt. His study of five groups -- Navaho, Zuni, Mormon, Texan homesteader, and and Spanish American -- were compared to see how they settled in a similar landscape (Vogt, 1966). The study brought forth the idea that within the possibilities and limitations of the environment, each of the five cultural groups developed and maintained patterns of settlement and land-use which were definitely influenced by cultural definitions of the most desirable way to live upon and use the land.

Vogt found that there was also evidence that the amount of clustering or spreading of human habitation over the landscape had implications on the type of social organization. For instance, if the population was spread thinly over the landscape they were likely to have a relatively simple, loosely structured social organization, unless there was a major feature where the entire group could gather, such as a meeting house. Populations living

in compact villages were likely to have a more complex, more highly integrated and tightly structured social organization. This type of organization of the group enabled them to handle the basic problems of social and political order which can often develop because of a more concentrated group of people.

Another study investigated three immigrant groups: the Mennonites, Swedish, and French-Canadians and the manner in which they established and retained a territorial base for their rural communities in central Kansas (McQuillan, 1978). Through the analysis of the different value systems, McQuillan was able to determine the strength of each group's territorial base, explain the goals of each group as they established new communities in Kansas, to account for the influence of population dynamics and the financial analysis of the changing patterns of land ownership and relating these patterns to Americanization and survival of ethnic identity (McQuillan, 1978). He found that in comparing the three groups, the Mennonites would more likely to succeed in maintaining the homogeneity of their communities, for they either passed the land down through the family or would sell only to another Mennonite. He also found that the Mennonites were less likely to rent their farms and during economic depression were conscientious to protect their land from transfer to outsiders. They obtained mortgages

from other Mennonites and had the lowest frequency of mortgage foreclosure among the three groups (McQuillan,1978). During 1885-1895 there was an acute economic depression and the Mennonites suffered losses in land retention. McQuillan found that the survival of a homogenous settlement facilitates the retention of traditional mores, values, language, religion and the general way of life. This analysis of land ownership of farmland is another one of the ways to understand the survival of ethnic communities. Through the use of land ownership records, McQuillan saw that the "record of land ownership reflects the nature of family ties and family continuity, it reveals something of the economic adversity and it informs us of the strength of community ties" (McQuillan,1978).

Ethnicity can also be observed through agriculture patterns. By studying the type of crops grown and the diversity of crops, Baltensperger (1983) suggest that although the Russian Germans in Nebraska adopted the basic premises of a dominant economic system, they did not abandon their traditional agricultural patterns, especially when the imported traits and practices were ecologically adaptive. Baltensperger found that the most striking characteristic of the Russian German culture retained, was the production of a large variety of crops. They averaged more than three crops

per farm and in some years grew four. This diversity of crops was a good protection against drought which they had to deal with while in Russia. When they immigrated to America, they continued this tradition on the plains which were very similar to the Russian steppes. While they have adapted to the host society in some ways, they have also been able to retain their traditional pattern of maintaining crop diversity.

Studies of the Mennonites in Canada showed that their settlements differed from the settlements of the non-Mennonites in the same region (Warkentin, 1959). The Mennonites had been accustomed to living in street villages in Russia. When they migrated to Canada, they created similar farm villages in Manitoba. Although most of the villages have disappeared there is still evidence of the villages in the form of a long row of cottonwood trees which had lined the central street. In his studies Warkentin dealt with the process by which immigrating ethnic groups introduced only some of their Old World traits while abandoning or modifying others and also adopting some new traits. Another study of the Mennonites in Canada by Leo Dridger (Dridger, 1977), was able to show the decline of an Old Colony community through the years. In 1955 there had been fifteen villages. By 1977 two of the villages were gone and the others had declined. They had settled in the

village street pattern, however in twenty-five years that basic pattern of the Russian Mennonite village was disturbed. The house-barn-shed combination was scarce in 1977 and the German based schools were also gone by 1977 when all villages schools were consolidated. Dridger's research concluded that the decline of the Hague-Osler Old Colony community had been a process of migration, transportation, industrialization and liberalization. Instead of assimilation, most of the descendants of the original pioneers were no longer in this area but had voluntarily migrated. Those who stayed joined more liberal Mennonite groups.

McQuillan (1978) conducted a study comparing the Mennonites, French Canadians, and the Swedes using farm size as an index of financial success in agriculture. By studying these three groups between the years 1875 and 1925, he found that the Mennonites appeared to have been more successful. Although their farms were the smallest, the value of farm real estate and capital investment in equipment was highest. Through farming techniques, the Mennonites were able to show their territory and ethnic identity on the landscape (McQuillan, 1978). By studying changes of land ownership, the adjustments made by an ethnic group which are necessary to assimilate and to establish the values of the host society are displayed. McQuillan found

that the records of land ownership can reflect the nature of family ties and family continuity, reveal something of the economic success of immigrants and also inform one of the strengths of community ties. In the Mennonite settlement, non-Mennonite values were not a significant influence due to the Mennonites' close knit community. It appears that economic influences were more instrumental in changing the agricultural landscape not long after the Mennonites reached Kansas. This change in the landscape is partly due to the use of new farming inventions which increased productivity by being quicker and cultivating a greater area at one time.

Elements within the Landscape

Studies that have been involved with viewing the elements within the landscape such as structures, fences, and vegetation also demonstrate a groups' relation to the land. Trewartha (1948) began to look at the farmstead to determine regional differences. By studying the relationship of farmsteads to the highway, counting the number of buildings within the yards, if there was separation of front yards and back yards, size of houses, barns and if there were granaries or silos, specific differences were identified. Trewartha discovered that in the Cornbelt area, of which Kansas is included, farmsteads had a greater number of buildings and the houses were of an average size. Barns were of an average or smaller size and

the type of barn did not seem to indicate the capacity for a large amount of hay storage. Three fourths of the farms in this area also had gardens. There were also more numerous garages, poultry houses, machine sheds, corn cribs, and hog houses. In this study culture groups were not identified only regional areas, therefore this study served as a basis to an overall view of the country. By taking one of the regional areas defined and breaking it down farther one would probably be able to see differences due to cultural responses within the regional area.

Through the use of measurements of buildings and layout and the relationship to significant landscape elements, such as fences, field patterns, site access, water supply, gardens, and orchards. Tisher and Alanen were able to show differences between the Finnish farmstead in the Old World and the Finnish farmstead in America (Alanen & Tisher, 1980). They found that the physical character of farmsteads was more extensive and diversified in Finland than in Finnish-American settlements. However, at the same time, the underlying factors responsible for the Finnish farmstead organization in America were no less complex or complicated than in the Old World. Cultural, economic, social and environmental conditions came together in new ways to create a "unique" version of the farmstead unit. By comparing the farmsteads developed by the Finnish immigrants in Wisconsin

with prototypical examples from Finland it was possible to determine both differences and similarities in functional and morphological characteristics.

The National Park Service has identified cultural and historical districts through such physiographic characteristics as topography, vegetation, ecological context, hydrology, soils, vegetation patterns, biotic communities, historical, cultural, and anthropological studies (National Park Service, 1984). The National Park Service is concerned about the evaluation of districts so that they can plan for cultural and natural resources as well as interpretation and visitor experience. Robert Melnick (1984) has determined what components must be analyzed in order to identify cultural landscapes within the National Park Service lands. These components which he discusses, focus entirely upon elements that are man-made or have been influenced by man. His methodology breaks the cultural landscape into three major parts: context, organization, and elements within the landscape. Within these three parts, the cultural landscape is further broken down so that defining the landscape is more specific. Through the organization of the landscape, the relationship of built forms to major natural elements, circulation patterns, boundary controlling elements such as hedges and fences, the site arrangement of the farmstead and the town

and the relation between the two, the total landscape can be studied and evaluated. The elements of the cultural landscape such as vegetation patterns related to land use, building types and functions, and small-scale elements can also be evaluated using this methodology. Melnick also includes historical views and other perceptual qualities as part of this process (Melnick,1984). This type of methodology allows for alterations to be noted so that one is able to understand the landscape as a totality and as a changing process. By noting the components in the landscape and the relationship between the specific component and the physical landscape, the cultural landscape is created.

Robert Melnick's criteria was used as the bases for documenting the continuing presence of the past of a rural community, Ebey's Landing on Widbey's Island in the Puget Sound of Washington (National Park Service,1984). A report of this community was compiled in order to communicate to the residents of the reserve, its past traditions of land use and building styles that they will help maintain. Through the use of USGS maps, interviews, historical research and on-site field work, an overall view of the character of Ebey's Landing emerged. The group of researchers were not only able to document the character of the landscape but also those man-made elements so that combined, they determined the true "sense of place". This

documentation will be used for future management of the reserve's resources while maintaining the historical integrity of the place.

Conclusion

The above studies have all dealt with the meaning of human existence in the world. Many people have immigrated from various parts of the world to a new place and have either been assimilated into the host society, retained some of their cultural traditions, or have not associated with the host society but remained in closed communities. No matter what the environment, there are some traditional settlement patterns that will differentiate the various cultural groups that settle in the same area (Vogt, 1966). It is important to understand the differences and to realize that people do not settle the same, although the overall pattern observed may appear the same. The components used in the research of these rural settlements may vary from large scale and looking at regional spatial organization and referring to the relationship among major material components, predominant landforms, and natural features, to small scale elements such as fences (Melnick, 1984). Through the observation of these components, a picture begins to

emerge of the first settlement, the change through the years of the use of the land and the details of traditional practice and modern adaptations.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Various resources had to be employed in order to analyze the relationship between the cultural and physical landscape and to identify the characteristics and qualities which are particular to the Mennonites. First, it was necessary to understand the history of the Mennonites and how they finally settled in Marion County, Kansas. Secondly, it was important to have some knowledge of the evolution of agriculture and agricultural practices used in this region. Once the history of the Mennonites and the evolution of agriculture were researched, the analysis of the cultural landscape was possible. The process developed by Melnick (1984) and discussed in the preceding chapter was then employed for analysis of the cultural and physical landscape. Once this analysis was accomplished all the information that was gathered was synthesized and conclusions could be made concerning the Mennonite settlement upon the landscape.

Robert Melnick's process for identifying rural historic districts, which was employed in this study, allows for documentation of all the landscape components that are necessary in understanding a group's settlement pattern.

Melnick was suggesting a methodology for analyzing and evaluating cultural landscapes within the National Parks in order for management of those landscapes. To manage a landscape one must be able to understand it and it is for this reason that Melnick realized that a cultural landscape exists within a larger natural setting and consists of many components. It is the interrelationship of these components that define and characterize a cultural landscape. In Melnick's (1984) methodology the components of the cultural landscape are:

Context

1. Overall cultural landscape organization.
2. General land-use activities.
3. Specific land-use activities.

Organization

4. Relationship of built form to major natural elements.
5. Circulation networks & patterns.
6. Boundary controlling elements.
7. Site arrangement.

Elements

8. Vegetation patterns related to land use.
9. Building types & functions.
10. Materials and construction techniques.
11. Small-scale elements.
12. Cemeteries & other symbolic places.
13. Historical views and other perceptual qualities.

Through the application of this process, the regional landscape is considered as well as the smaller landscape that is found within the farmstead. This permits the researcher with the opportunity to acquire a more thorough understanding of the settlement of these people and the

changes that have occurred through the years in the landscape due to the changes in the needs of the people existing within that landscape.

Site Selection

The site selected for this research was the Mennonite village of Gnadenau which was situated in the Liberty Township of Marion County, Kansas on section 11,1,3,15,and 13. Gnadenau was chosen for this study because it was the only true village laid out in the Russian street village pattern (Wiebe, 1967; David Wiebe, personal interview, 1983; Raymond Wiebe, personal interview, 1986). This village consisted of private residences, as well as a blacksmith, store, church, school, and mill. At the time of initial settlement the village consisted of approximately twenty families (D. Wiebe personal communication, October,1985) (see Figure 3.1). The first settlers of Gnadenau were all from the village of Annenfeld in Russia. They emigrated as a group from Russia to America.

The surrounding landscape as well as the farmstead within the village will be examined at the time of initial settlement in 1874 and again when the first immigrants began to move out of the village onto their individual farms. The first section of this study identifies and analyzes the general overall village pattern found in Gnadenau.

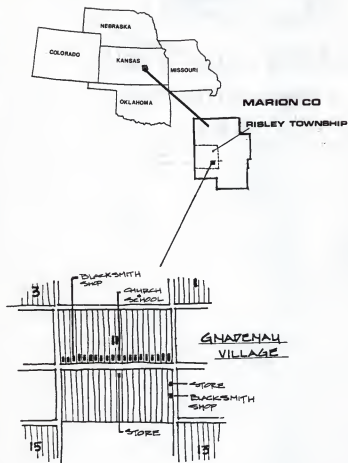


Figure 3.1 . Location of the Gadenau village in 1874.

Within this settlement, each family lived on narrow sections of sixteen acres and travelled outside of the village to their fields. The next movement which began in 1878, was the migration out to the individual farmsteads and the accumulation of more acreage. This was the beginning of the progression of an increase in farm size and a decrease in the number of families owning land. The analysis will also identify and analyze the second home that was built on the individual farmsteads. There will also be an analysis of the overall land use pattern in 1902 (Standard Atlas of Marion County, Kansas, 1905) when the movement out to the individual farms ended and all the land in Liberty Township had been divided into individually owned farms.

For each time period included in this study, the following components will be analyzed for the overall landscape organization:

1. Circulation - dirt roads, paved roads, trails.
2. Land use - field pattern, farming, ranching, dairying.
3. Distance of farmsteads from each other.
4. Orientation and layout of farm structures.
5. Response to natural features - topography, water.
6. Boundary demarcations - cultural, political, natural.
7. Vegetation.

The above seven components determine the organization of the overall landscape. Circulation patterns can be intentional, such as roads, or unintentional as in paths and livestock trails. These networks show how people move

through their landscape and gives the overall landscape a definite pattern. The land use component demonstrates the way in which people use the land and this is a major impact that forms the cultural landscape. Land use can also demonstrate cultural responses or technological impacts. It may also show how people can relate to the environment by the adaptive innovations they use to survive in that landscape. Orientation and layout of the farm structures can demonstrate cultural characteristics as well as changes in technology. The response to natural features is a direct physical response that can reveal traditions of land use and lifestyles. Boundary demarcations can also be visible evidence of cultural adaptations and vegetation can be a cultural implement and can explain a personal place in the landscape.

After analyzing the overall landscape, the individual farmstead will be given attention. An analysis of the farmstead within the village in 1874 and the second farmstead outside of the village will be done. During these time periods the following components will be analyzed:

1. Arrangement of farm structures.
2. Vegetation - windbreaks, hedgerows, garden, orchards, fields.
3. Changes in the usage of buildings.
4. Orientation of farm to fields.
5. Orientation of farm to road.

These components used to evaluate the farmstead are the

deliberate attempt of the people to identify themselves in the landscape. The arrangement of the farm structures, the vegetation, the orientation of the farm to the fields, and the orientation of the farm to the road, can all demonstrate cultural traditions and adaptations to the environment. The changes in the useage of the buildings can show changes in the needs of the people and changes in agricultural technology.

Data Collection

The data that was collected for this study included

- 1) visual documentation such as maps, photographs, sketches,
- 2) written documentation and
- 3) oral communication.

By combining all three types of data collection and comparing the information a clearer picture of settlement is possible.

1. Photographs, maps and sketches were obtained to document the layout of the village and its visual characteristic. Because this study involves historical research, the sketches and maps were important in understanding the structures that no longer exist and their relationship to the surrounding landscape. Because the German-Russian Mennonites did not believe in photographs in the 1870's, an early visual account of the Gnadenau settlement was obtained through sketches by observers and reporters of the newspapers visiting Gnadenau and the

surrounding area. Photographs taken after 1880, were useful for determining the construction and architecture of the farmsteads and in some cases the proximity of buildings to each other. These photographs were obtained through the people interviewed and in the family histories which are available at the Bethel Archival Library. Photographs taken in Russia that were also a part of the photograph collection at Bethel Archival Library, the family histories and from the book In the Fullness of Time: 150 Years of Mennonite Sojourn in Russia, (Quiring and Bartel, 1974) were important in displaying the architecture during the time immediately before emigration of the German-Russians. The layout of these Russian farmsteads was duplicated in Gnadenau when the Mennonites established their village. The county atlases of 1885 and 1902 were also very important for a visual analysis of how land ownership changed through the years and the layout of the sections 13, 1, 3, 11, and 15.

2. Written documentation was collected through the use of documents recording the history of the German-Russian Mennonites, the history of Kansas agriculture, newspaper accounts of visitors' observations of the settlers, autobiographies, genealogies, and diaries that were all obtained through the Kansas State Historical Society Library, Tabor Library, and Bethel Archival Library. Other

useful sources of information were the agricultural census for Marion County, the county deeds records and the Kansas State and Federal Census taken during the years within this study. The agricultural census was useful for understanding what was occurring on the farmstead. For instance, this census would give the number of acreage a farmer owned, if it was fenced or not and the type of fencing if there was any. The agricultural census would also give the crops the farmer was growing, the livestock being raised, and the type of fruit trees growing in the orchards. The county deeds records and the Kansas State and Federal Census were used to as additional sources to verify land ownership.

Also through the use of the agricultural census reports for 1875, 1885, 1895, and 1905, the county deeds book of Marion County and the Atchison, Santa Fe Railroad Land Sales Book of the Santa Fe Railroad Company, a picture of the overall landscape becomes apparent. The county deeds books of Marion County were helpful in documenting land ownership in the 1870's and also through the description of the plot of land it was evident how the layout of the fields were in those sections bought by Elder Wiebe and Johann Fast for their group.

The Atchison, Santa Fe Railroad Land Sales Book (1874) showed who bought the land in 1874 and how the land was

assigned to the various citizens in the community in 1876. This sales book also recorded the incorporation of the smaller sections of land into larger sections that began occurring in 1879 and who was assigned to these larger sections. From this information, one can note the beginning of the dispersion of the Mennonite Russian village layout and the manner in which the sections of land were consolidated. Instead of five people owning an area of land only two became sole owners in the early 1880's. Comparison of the county atlas map to the Atchison, Santa Fe Railroad Land Sales Book and the county deeds records gave a more complete documentation and validity to what was actually occurring in that area of Marion County.

The deeds books and the railroad land sales book were only useful sources for land ownership. The agricultural census was good for more detail on the farmstead, however there could be the question of how careful the census taker was when surveying a farm. Also the first immigrants did not speak English, therefore there could have been misinterpretations between the farmer and the census taker.

3. Interviews were conducted with the descendants of the first immigrants or with those people who lived on land that had been owned by the first immigrants. Eight of the people interviewed were the grandchildren of the initial settlers. Of the other three people interviewed, two were

the grandchildren of settlers that arrived in the area in after 1874, and the last interviewee was a son of a settler who arrived in the 1880's. The information obtained from these interviews provided useful data that was not available through written information and photographs. Since the landscape of the 1870's and 1880's has disappeared, it is only through the memories of the people that the original farmsteads can be documented. The Mennonites care for the land but there has been little documentation of the landscape and the farmsteads that were settled in 1874 and 1884. It is only through the interviews that a complete picture of the layout of the farmsteads becomes possible. Although there were only eleven interviews, these people are the only ones remaining in the community who remember their grandparents and the farmstead in the 1880's, 1890's and 1900's. They were able to give an account of the old farmstead and a description of the area, through stories that were handed down and actually living on the farmstead that was established in the 1880's.

Since this methodology incorporated three different areas of data collection, there was a check-and-balance type of validity testing. By comparing all three areas of data collection and checking for correlations, a picture of the settlement was possible.

Analysis of Data

In order to better understand the settlement of the Mennonites, it was first necessary to understand the background and history of the German-Russian Mennonites of this area. Research conducted by others of the German-Russians Mennonites was first examined. This work spanned their religious beginnings in Holland up to their settlement in America. The history of Kansas agriculture was necessary in order to understand the type of farming that was occurring at specific times. Field size and types of crops being grown could be accounted for through the changes in farm technology. By understanding the evolution of agriculture, one could begin to notice if the Russian-German Mennonites used their own techniques for farming or borrowed from the Americans.

Following my research of the history of the Mennonites and agriculture practices, the material that had been gathered could be synthesized and a re-creation of the landscape was possible. From this re-creation of the cultural landscape, the process of assimilation to the American way-of-life could be identified through the changes in the farmstead and the regional layout of the area. Also, through this synthesis of information, the changing process of the Mennonites could be observed and how they situated themselves on the landscape.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF A MENNONITE SETTLEMENT

Four stages of settlement of the German-Russian Mennonites were analyzed in order to understand the changes that occurred in their settlement on the Kansas prairie. The following settlement stages will be described in detail: the Russian settlement, the initial settlement in 1874, the dispersal of the village, and finally the permanent home in 1905. The surrounding landscape will also be analyzed during these different periods of change.

VILLAGE AND FARMSTEAD LAYOUT IN RUSSIA

In order to understand the settlement of the Mennonites in Marion County, one must gain an understanding of the Russian landscape which they left in 1874. As noted previously, the topography of the Russian steppes is very similar to the Kansas prairie. The steppes consist of gently rolling land with grasses on the uplands and hardwoods found along the river and creek beds. The German-Russian Mennonites had situated themselves on the landscape in tightly formed village clusters surrounded by the woods and cultivated fields. The villages tended to be in close

proximity for protection against marauders and for social interaction.

The villages conformed to the natural barriers, however on the steppes there were few of these. The houses within the villages were single story resembling the low hills surrounding them. The main street was broad with shade trees lining both sides. Trees were also used to outline the individual farmstead. Instead of hardwoods only appearing along the creekbeds, they were now seen on the uplands. Most of the villages settled close to streams. In this climate it was necessary to have water in order to irrigate the fields.

The village was tightly organized with the farmstead and the farmyard, then as one progressed outward the organization became more loose. In all of the German-Russian settlements, the church and school would be in the center of the village on the most prominent street. Karl Stumpp remarked that this characteristic of the German village signified that "the cultural center of the colonists life found visible expression in the layout of the village" (Stumpp, 1967). The village was an organized unit compared to the disorganization of the wilderness surrounding them. A conceptual layout of the overall village in Figure 4.1

demonstrates the relationship between the village, orchard, woods and the fields and pastures.

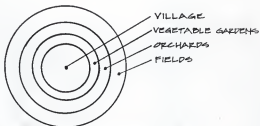


Figure 4.1 . Overall village layout showing the relation of the village to the orchards, woods and fields.

Stilgoe (1982) notes that the antithesis of wilderness is landscape, the land is shaped by man. Originally the word was German-Landschaft. A landschaft was not a village, but a collection of dwellings and other structures, gathered together and surrounded by a circle of pasture, meadow and planting fields, which was surrounded by unimproved forest or marsh. Within the so-called village center, an object of religious significance was erected and symbolized the essence of the landschaft. In early days a tree or simple staffs hewn from stone or tree trunks would mark the focus of settlement. The word "landshaft" meant more than an

organization of space, it also connotated the inhabitants of the place and their obligations to one another and to the land (Stilgoe, 1982). Within the ring of common fields, the landschaft sheltered the house and dwellings, displayed and reinforced the status of the inhabitants.

A permanent house would become a stead. These steads could vary but the basic design was a rectangle made by buildings and fences. The house comprised one edge of the enclosure; a small stable and cow-house formed another. Within its walls was the yard, the focus of agriculture activity other than planting and just beyond lay the kitchen garden and usually several fruit trees. Having a stead, a house and yard, meant having some fragment of outdoor space secured from chaos and made profitable (Stilgoe, 1982).

The fields were laid out in the traditional pattern of the landschaft. The small nucleus of dwellings, circled by the daily lands (garden plots, orchards, and fields) that required daily attention. A second ring of fields worked less intensively was usually planted in rye or other cereal. A third, of meadow, hayed once or twice a summer and a fourth of pasture (Stilgoe, 1982). The patterns however were determined by walking or maintenance. Those fields that needed more attention were closer than those that needed little maintenance.

The Mennonite villages in Russia resembled the landschaft of the European countries. Their center would be marked by the church and school. The houses then surrounded the church and each house was surrounded by a garden. Behind the house were the vegetable gardens, then the woods, and finally the meadows and grain fields. The land immediately behind each house extended a considerable distance in a narrow strip (Smith, 1830). Outside the village the fields were also divided-up into the narrow strips that occurred in the village.

Within the village the streets were lined with acacia trees on each side. In the Black Sea Region (Figure 4.2), there were always trees around the house to protect against the heat. The acacias were often used to line the streets (Stumpp, 1967) and were an important part of the landscape to the people. They grew well in subtropical areas and the flowers of these trees are very fragrant. Even today the southern European countries collect the flowers for a perfume ingredient (Audubon Society, 1980). Elder Wiebe mentioned in his diary when he was leaving his village of Annenfeld that "we turned back to take one more good look at our beautiful acacia trees in full bloom..." (Bradley, 1920). Shade trees and other trees were important to the community for they sheltered the gardens from the wind and heat, they sheltered the houses from the heat and they clearly showed

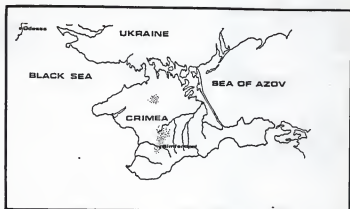


Figure 4.2 . Area map of the Crimea and Black Sea region. The German-Russian Mennonites who settled Gnadenau emigrated from this area of Russia.

the boundaries of each farmstead in the village and emphasized the line of the street. The house stood far enough from the street to allow for grass, a flower garden, a few trees and a wooden fence. If one was looking from the street into the farmyard, the house would be on the right-hand side and the farmyard would be to the left. The farmyards were 360 feet by 120 feet and were divided into the front area and the back area. The barn was attached to the house at the gabled end and was in direct line with the house. The gabled end of the house faced the street and the barn was usually north of the house. H.B.Friesen (Schmidt, 1974) remarked that often in Russia, the farmsteads had approximately one half of an acre of woodland planted with different varieties of trees. Also on many farmsteads there would be several rows of mulberry trees and on the boundaries of each plot there were mulberry hedges. No one was able to give a specific reason for using the mulberry tree as a hedge except that it grows well in that area. Also the Mennonites raised the trees as orchard trees for their berries and some people raised the mulberry for the silk worm industry.

The front area of the farmstead consisted of the dwelling, barns, flower gardens, summer kitchen and well. The back area contained the threshing floor, straw stacks,

manure piles, hog barns and the orchard was in the rear area (Figure 4.3). Often the farm buildings would enclose the yard in a form of a horseshoe and the entrance to the house would be facing east into the farmyard.

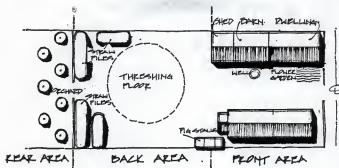


Figure 4.3 . The German-Russian Mennonite farmstead divided into three distinct areas of farm activity.

The well was shared with the animals so it was usually between the house entrance and the barn. If water was deep, 300 feet to 450 feet deep, then one well served the entire village and was located near the center of the town. The flower garden was fenced in by a board fence or a picket fence. There was a path from the entrance of the house to the village street as well as a drive from the street to the farmyard. The farmers also planted rows and hedges of trees to shelter the garden from the wind and define the boundaries of each farmyard.

In the Black Sea Region many of the dwellings were made of adobe bricks. Clay, mixed with straw, manure, and water was worked until it became a viscous mass and was then pressed into wooden molds to form rectangular building blocks and left to dry. After drying for several days they were ready to be used for building. The Ukrainians always built their houses in this manner and it was the principal building material for the German-Russian Mennonites in this region (Stumpp, 1967). Because these adobe houses were built of native material and single-storied, they were compatible with the surrounding landscape. They were a part of the landscape, being of the earth they were situated on and resembling the low hills around them.

The German-Russian Mennonite village was in the tradition of the beginning landschaft. They had created a ordered place to counteract the chaos of the open, unordered steppes. In Germany they had to cut their settlement out of a wooded wilderness. On the Russian steppes, instead of cutting down trees they were planting them and creating an oasis on the so-called barren steppes. The Mennonites also did not mix with the Russian natives whom they thought were beneath them. The Russians in this area were not farmers but nomads. They did not create permanent homes and have the structured, well-ordered homes as did most of the Mennonites. In many cases the Mennonites would have animals

or equipment stolen from them by the Russian natives (Mrs. J. Classen, personal communication, April 21, 1986). It seems as though the Mennonites saw the nomads as a part of the chaos of the wilderness. The Mennonites tried not to associate with the Russians and remained in their closed community. Because of this, they were able to maintain their traditional ways of farming and lifestyle without any outside interference or competition.

VILLAGE AND FARMSTEAD LAYOUT IN 1874 IN MARION, KANSAS

When the Mennonite village group from Annenfeld, Russia settled in the Arkansas Valley the landscape resembled that of their homeland. The Arkansas Valley in which Marion County is located, consisted of tall prairie grass, gently rolling hills and trees which can be found mostly along the creeks and river lowlands. The first Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture to the Kansas Legislature in 1878 rated Marion County as 84% upland, 98% prairie, 15% bottom land with 3% timber and the average widths of bottoms were one mile in width (State Board of Agriculture, 1878). Within the Liberty Township (which was Risley Township in 1874) one will find a range of nearly level to moderately steep slopes with well to moderately-well drained soils. On the flood plains and uplands, the soil ranges from a loamy or silty subsoil to clayey subsoil. Water is usually found

at a depth of twenty to seventy feet depending on location and it is generally hard due to the underlying limestone bed. The Cottonwood River and its tributaries run through this area and drain approximately two-thirds of the county from the northwest to the southeast (Figure 4.4). Andreas (1883) wrote that Marion County contained more water than any other county in Kansas.



Figure 4.4 . The Cottonwood River and its tributaries draining approximately two-thirds of Marion County.

The sections owned by the village of Gnadenau contained tributaries of the Cottonwood River as it ran in a southeast direction across much of their land. A long time inhabitant of Hillsboro, John Jost, remarked that a stream which ran through the land he had farmed was spring fed and "never froze in the winter and never dried in the drought of summer" (John Jost, personal communication, May 22, 1986). Mr. Jost also told about three springs that he knew existed in the South Cottonwood Creek east of his farm. Therefore water is always available throughout the year. The Mennonites took advantage of this water by orienting their fields in a north-south direction along the tributaries and the South Cottonwood Creek itself. Figure 4.5 demonstrates the orientation of the sections of farm land to the creek. By orienting the sections in this manner almost every farmer had water running through their land.



Figure 4.5 . The sections of land owned by the villagers of Gnadenau laid out for the availability of water to more fields.

The village of Gnadenau was situated on the upland, with the houses on the north side of the half section road. To the south of the village, one could overlook the valley and the course of the South Cottonwood Creek (Figure 4.6). The only vertical elements in this landscape were the trees along this stream. otherwise it was a land of prairie grass. Because the village was on the upland, it was protected from flooding of the creek. The Mennonites were able to take advantage of the fertile soil of the lowlands for their fields. Gnadenau was also well situated in order to protect the village from outside influences. The nearest railroad station at Peabody was fourteen miles to the southeast, and Marion Center was ten miles west of Gnadenau (Figure 4.7).

By the time the Mennonites settled in Marion County, the area had already been surveyed into the rectangular pattern (Baughman, 1961). A section of land was a square mile and the dirt roads emphasized this pattern. The Mennonites who settled Gnadenau were able to duplicate their village pattern onto this system. They created their long narrow strips of land within the 640 acres sections, so that instead of one person owning a section of land, there were at least twelve or more people owning land in that one section of 640 acres (Atchison, Santa Fe Railroad Land Sales Book, 1875). Also, these Mennonites were able to situate their village on the half mile road that ran east and west

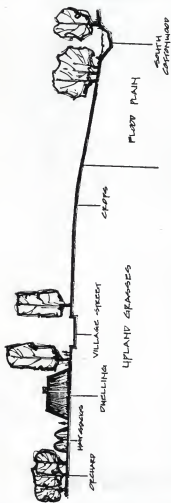


Figure 4.6 . Gadsdenau situated on the upland grasses overlooking the valley of the Cottonwood.



Figure 4.7 . Gnadensau in relation to Marion Center and Peabody. Peabody was the closest railroad station to Gnadensau.

across section 11 in Risley Township instead of on the mile or section road. The other group of Mennonites that had come with the Gnadensau group settled two miles west and one mile south in the settlement of Hoffnungstal. Their farmsteads were also situated on a half mile road. Both groups duplicated the settlement pattern common in Russia. The houses were arranged in the Russian street village pattern and the two villages were in close proximity to each other (Figure 4.8). Although in the United States there was

less tendency to be attacked from marauders, they still settled close together for communal support.

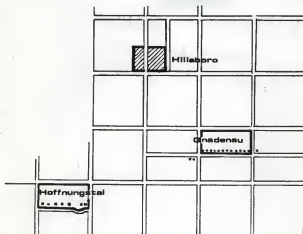


Figure 4.8 . Area map showing the relationship between Gadenau and Hoffnungstal. The settlements were situated close together for communal support.

The roads followed the section lines, however, the Mennonites created their own path to the nearest railroad for market. Ignoring the roads, they travelled the shortest route to Peabody, which was their center for commerce (Figure 4.9). Soon, there was a definite trail from Gadenau and the other settlements across the landscape to this town. Stilgoe mentioned in reference to the rectangular pattern that the northerners complained about taking the long way, the southerners liked to race on the straight run (Stilgoe,

1982). The Mennonites just made their own path for the shortest route. Then in 1879, when the railroad line was installed in Hillsboro, the trail was abandoned. Now people were able to go the shorter distance to Hillsboro to collect or sell goods from the railroad rather than go the fourteen miles to Peabody. The path to Peabody slowly disappeared.



Figure 4.9 . The Gadenau trail.

Scott (1979) noticed that roads emerged as links between produce and market rather than as a form-giving element or as a means of sub-dividing. The Gadenau trail was such a road because it quickly changed with the introduction of a railroad stop in close proximity to the settlement. Due to the types of roads in this area of Kansas, the Mennonites had to stop using their ladder waggons (Figure 4.10) which

they had brought with them from Russia. The wheel span on these wagons was much narrower than the American hay wagons, therefore they were continually getting stuck in the ruts of the American wagons and were inefficient.



Figure 4.10 . The Loda wagon that the German-Russian Mennonites brought from Russia. This wagon was soon abandoned in favor of the American hay wagon. From Marion County, Kansas Past and Present by Sondra Van Meter, 1972, Hillsboro: Board of Directors of the Marion County Historical Society.

The Gnadenau village in Marion County consisted of approximately twenty-two families (Atchison, Santa Fe Railroad Land Sales Book, 1875; David Wiebe, personal communication, September, 1985). The farms were located on the north side of the village street which ran in an east-

west direction and bisected section 11 in the Risley Township, Marion County, into two equal sections (Figure 4.11). The houses were all located on the north side for protection. John Jost remarked that "when one needed help you could open up the back door and holler real loud. If it wasn't too windy, the neighbor could hear you, because they were only half a block, some a block apart." (John Jost, personal communication, May 22, 1986). Each farm consisted of sixteen acres and was half a mile in length and approximately 264 feet in width. The middle of the village was reserved for the school and the church and stores were located at the end of the village. The town was self-sufficient with it's own blacksmith, grocery, cobbler, and miller.

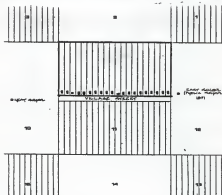


Figure 4.11 . The village of Gnadenau in 1874, Section 11, Risley Township, Marion County, bisected with the dwellings on the north side of the half mile road.

Surrounding the village were the vegetable gardens and the orchards and after these came the meadows and grain fields. This layout of the fields was similar to the Molotschna farm as shown in Figure 2.5. Noble Prentis, a journalist who was visiting Gnadenau, remarked that as they drove along before arriving at the village proper, they saw "an immensity of broken prairie before we arrived at the acres of sod corn and watermelons which mark the corporation line of Gnadenau" (Prentis, 1889).

Since this village pattern was communal, the remaining sections of land bought for the village were sectioned off and numbered in a corresponding pattern to each farmstead within the village (Figure 4.12). There were twenty strips of land that were numbered from the west to the center and from the east to the center, creating ten strips on each side of the road for each half of the village. The land on the other four sections was likewise divided into twenty strips, each containing thirty-two acres and numbered in the same order as those in the village (Janzen, 1926). Everyone received the same amount of land to till. However, topographical features were not taken into account so some of the villagers may not have received land equal in quality to what others received.

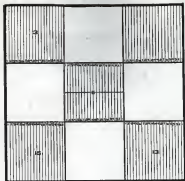


Figure 4.12 . Sections numbered to correspond to the farmsteads in the village.

In a study done in the Reinland district in the Western Reserve of Manitoba (Warkentin, 1959), ten acres were reserved for the farm buildings, house, barnyard, vegetable and flower garden. A strip of land the width of the building plot and extending throughout the length of the section, called the Hauskauel, formed the nearest field. Each farmer was also given other strips enough to make up his 160 acres and so distributed about the entire area that all fared equally both as to the quality of land and to the distance from the village. All made use of a common pasture where the cattle were taken. This arrangement of land was a duplicate of the Mennonite village in Russia. Gnadenau followed this layout of the village and the farmstead for the first years of settlement. Every farmer in Gnadenau

owned a total of 160 acres in 1875 (Federal Census 1875). Because of the communal system and the division of land into narrow strips within the different sections, a farmer could own land in two different sections. Usually a farmer would own 80 acres in one section and another 80 acres in a different section. At this time there were no fences of any kind and the major crops that were accounted for in the Agricultural Census of 1875 were winter wheat, rye, corn, barley, and oats. Sorghum was raised only for domestic use to make molasses. This information supports the fact that the Mennonites were maintaining crop diversity which they had learned and practiced in Russia.

The first dwellings constructed upon the Mennonites arrival in Gnadenau were crude shelters, called Zerrei. The Zerrei resembled an inverted V (Figure 4.13). Francis remarks that the Mennonites in Canada also constructed these type of dwellings and were twenty-six feet long and twenty-six feet wide (Francis, 1954). These structures were very similar to the shelters used in Russia by some of the nomadic groups when they were travelling. These first dwellings were dug two feet below ground level with the roof starting from ground and constructed of thatch. Elder Wiebe the leader of the group wrote in his diary that they "sat in our poor sod houses, some two feet deep in the ground, the walls of sod,



Figure 4.13 . The Zerrei was the first dwelling of many of the German-Russian Mennonites in Gnadenau. It was divided into the living area at one end and the other end was reserved for the livestock.

the roof of long reed grass that reached into the prairie." (Bradley, 1920). The family lived at one end of the hut which also contained a brick stove. The other end of the shelter was reserved for the animals. As soon as possible the adobe houses were built and the Zerrei became sheds or shelters for the animals. However, these shelters were used as living quarters for two or more years by some of the villagers before building the adobe houses (John Jost, personal communication, May 22 1986).

The adobe house was based upon the Russian pattern with the house and barn under one roof and the shed attached to the barn at a right angle. The house was rectangular with the barn attached at one end (Figure 4.14). The bricks used in building the house were of the same material and size of the adobe bricks used in Russia. The bricks were four inches thick, six inches wide and twelve inches long and the roof was thatched. Peter M. Barkman made his bricks for his

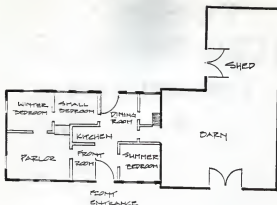


Figure 4.14 . Floor plan of the German-Russian Mennonite adobe house.

adobe house on his farm by plowing in a circle 15-20 feet across to loosen dirt at least 4 inches deep. Water and grasses were added and after the horses had walked around and around till the mud was thick and sticky, it was put into the wooden molds and left for a number of days to harden. The circle where the bricks were made was still visible in 1920, just north of the cattle barn (Berkman, 1982). Usually the foundations of the adobe houses were limestone which was quarried near by. The long side of the house faced the street and was situated far enough back from the road to allow for the planting of fruit and shade trees and setting out of flowers (Fantle, 1945).

The farmstead was again laid out as in Russia and divided into the front area, the back area and the rear. The

front area contained the flower garden, a few trees, a wooden fence of some type, and the well. In the back area there was a summer stove, and straw piles for fuel for the stoves (Figure 4.15).

In the Marion County Record (1876) it was noted that the Mennonites "yards are immense bouquets". Most of the farmyards consisted of flower gardens and orchards containing cherry, peach, apple, and apricot trees. From earlier settlers, the Mennonites learned to plant cottonwood trees which grew quickly. The cottonwoods also provided shade for the growth of the mulberry trees. The Mennonites were particularly fond of the mulberry fruit and had specially brought the seeds with them from Russia. On some farms, the mulberry tree was used for the silk industry. In this area of Marion County, the mulberry was popular only for its fruit. Because the mulberry tree was treated as a fruit tree, it was often grown in an orchard on the farmsteads. A few years after the Mennonites settled they began to use osage orange to fence off the farmsteads. This protected the cattle from outside dangers but also the hedges were used for decorative purposes. The Mennonites took pleasure in clearly marking the boundaries of their extensive farms (Bernave, 1949). From the beginning of their settlement, the Mennonites were very conscious about maintaining a well-kept farm and their self-sufficiency.

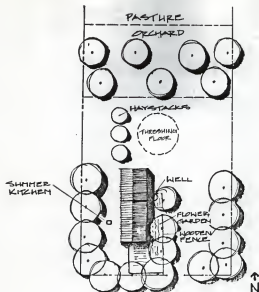


Figure 4.15 . Layout of the farmstead in 1874.

Noble Prentis commented on their trim buildings hedged with mulberry and that the farmsteads would be a "remarkable sight in any country" (Prentis, 1889). The Mennonites were on their way to creating a totally new environment on the Kansas prairie.

VILLAGE AND FARMSTEAD LAYOUT FROM 1880 TO THE 1890'S

By 1879 the village of Gnadenau was beginning to disperse. The 1870's and 1880's saw a major improvement in the efficiency of horse drawn ploughs, seeding drills,

threshers and harvesters. The farmers could enlarge their crop acreage because of these technological improvements. When the Mennonites had first arrived in the United States they had threshed their wheat with threshing stones that resembled the ones they had used in Russia (Figure 4.16).



Figure 4.16 . The threshing stone was used in Russia and during the first few years of settlement in the United States.

To compete effectively with other farmers, the Mennonites found themselves having to use American farm equipment and also acquire more land. It was no longer feasible to maintain the narrow strips of land that they had first laid out. Farmers within the community began buying and selling their land and consolidating acreage. During this time many Mennonites bought land beyond their means because the American neighbors were willing to sell at low prices. This buying led to inflated prices and to increased land speculation. Speculation reached its peak between 1887-1891. (Janzen, 1926). From the Federal Census of 1880 there

is not an increase in land holdings but the land has been re-organized. At this time there are only eight holdings within a section. Some of the holdings are also oriented in a east-west direction instead of maintaining the north-south orientation. In 1879, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad established a line between Marion Center and McPherson with a stop two miles north of Unadana which became the town of Hillsboro. The villagers were now able to market their grain and buy farm equipment in much less time. Also with the introduction of the railroad, new farming technology and interaction with people other than Mennonites, was unavoidable.

If one bases one's analysis on the 1880 census, the overall landscape now resembled a patchwork quilt. Defined boundaries made of hedge rows accentuated the fields. Orchards with fruit producing trees dotted the landscape. Where at one time the only vertical elements in this landscape were the trees along the creek beds there are now trees existing on the uplands, defining fields, dwellings, and roads. The landscape is becoming more diverse in texture and elevation. The prairie grasses are now being turned under and in their place the grain crops are being planted. The village is dispersing so that instead of a large cluster of buildings seen on the landscape there are now smaller clusters scattered over the land surrounded by

fields. These smaller clusters created by the buildings on the farmstead still remained close. There was the tendency for the house of neighbors to be separated only by a small field or orchard. Mrs. Classen remarked however, that one of the reasons that the villagers began to move was the closeness of the neighbors (Mrs. Classen, personal communication, April 16, 1986). Even though the village dispersed, the families remained relatively close to each other by locating their farmsteads close their neighbors. The grain fields extended in the back and on the other side of the farmstead.

By 1885, in section 11, where the original village had been, there are now only eight holdings and the lots are 80 acres instead of sixteen acres. Figure 4.17 shows section 11 and the other sections owned by the village. Ownership of the land has become consolidated and although section 11 still has the narrow lots, the other sections are beginning to conform to the surrounding area. They are more square and in section 1 and 13 the lots are changing in orientation. Instead of running in a north-south direction, they are now in a east-west orientation.

The church which had been the center of the village had deteriorated in 1877. The Mennonites built a new one on the south side of the village street and to the west end of the



Figure 4.17. The village of Gnadenau in the 1880's and the land holdings in sections 1, 3, 11, 13, and 15.

village (David Wiebe, personal communication, September, 1985; Mrs. Classen, personal communication, April 16, 1986). This church was made of adobe, however wood siding was put on the outside walls. The school remained near the center of the village however there was also an east and west school on both ends of the village. There was no longer a distinct visible element in the center of the village to keep it together. Also there was another landmark built on the west end of town, which was the mill of John Friesen. It resembled the Dutch windmill and was quite a dominant feature in the landscape (Figure 4.18).

The lots within the village are still oriented in a north-south direction and the dwellings remain on the north side of the road. The other sections that were owned by the

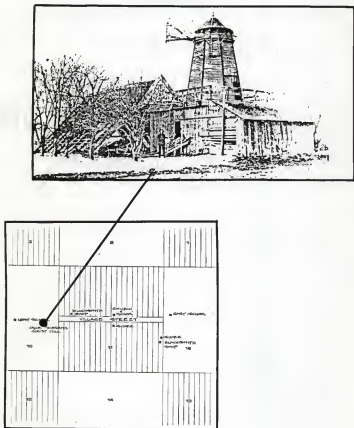


Figure 4.19 . Location of J.J. Friesen's grist mill.

village maintained a north-south orientation to an extent. however there is a beginning of some lots becoming oriented in a east-west direction and becoming more equal in length and width of the lot (Figure 4.19).



Figure 4.19 . Land ownership change from 1874 to 1885.

At this time the Mennonites were still only using hedges as fences instead of board (State Agricultural Census of 1885). The use of wire is just beginning to be used for fencing. There is still more acreage not under fence than there is fenced land. The diversity of crops is still evident although barley has been phased out because of economics (Baltensperger, 1983; State Agricultural Census of 1885) and millet has taken its place. Rye and sorghum are still being grown for domestic use only.

The villagers began moving out to their individual farms, and the farmstead began to change with the dispersion and consolidation of land. Peter Barkman, a resident of the Gnadenau village moved out of the village and to his "home place" or farmstead in 1878 (Figure 4.20). On his land he built an adobe home with the connected barn on the north side (Barkman, 1982). The well was in the front near the entrance to the house which faced in the farmyard. There was a summer kitchen and another separate kitchen both to the southeast of the house. The summer kitchens were popular and were just ovens that were outside and were not in any kind of shelter (John Jost, personal communication, May 22, 1986). Later a cattle barn, made of adobe and a horse barn were built separate from the house (Barkman, 1982).

In most cases the house and barn became separate buildings. The Mennonites saw that it was not necessary to lock up their farm equipment and livestock. In Russia it had been necessary to keep everything locked up or it would have been stolen by the Russians. In the United States, the Mennonites saw that their neighbors left their farm equipment out in the fields and it was not stolen. There was now no need to have the livestock, grain, and equipment so close to the house to guard (A.E. Janzen, personal communication, May 27, 1986). With the addition of other farm buildings to the farmyard, the shape of the farmyard

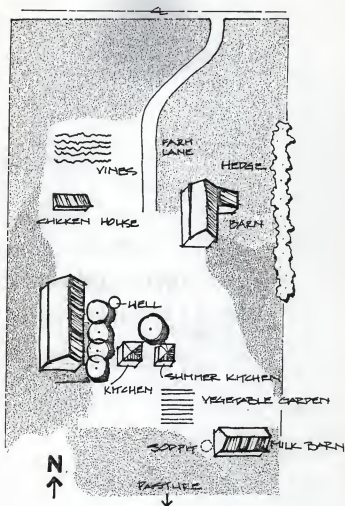


Figure 4.20 . the Peter Barimon farmsstead.

changed. The farmstead could now encompass a larger area of land. Whereas before, in 1875, the farmstead was restricted because of the narrowness of the lot. In the 1880's the farmstead is beginning to conform to the shape of the consolidated land surrounding it. Instead of the narrow strips of land and the linear farmstead, there is now a more square form to the land and to the farmstead.

During the 1880's and 1890's, the villagers were finding out about the American lifestyle. They increased the cultivated land and the utilities of the house changed. In most cases the granary, the barn, and the shed became separate buildings by the end of the 1880's. Although people had dispersed they were still in visual contact with the village since it was on a highest point in that area. The house entrance remained oriented to the farmyard and not to the road. With the increase of machinery the farmers were able to produce more grain, therefore a separate granary was necessary instead of being upstairs in the dwelling. In all cases the granary was situated so that the lane from the main road went through the building for easier accessibility for unloading and loading the grain. In most of the homes the long side of the granary was oriented in a north-south direction due to the direction of the lane coming in to the farmyard from the public road (Figure 4.21).

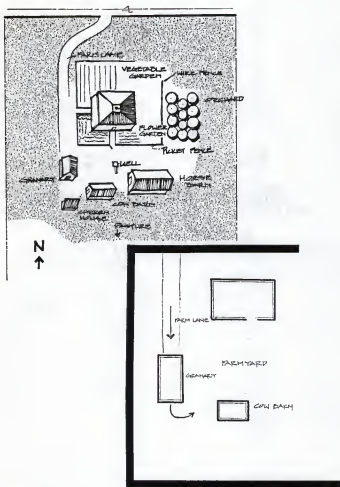


Figure 4.21 . . . The granary was usually situated in a north-south direction for accessibility from the farm line.

OVERALL LANDSCAPE AND FARMSTEAD LAYOUT

IN THE 1890's - 1900's

1893 land speculation had diminished and the land had become settled. Thatched roofs disappeared and many of the sod houses were used for barns and sheds (Janzen, 1926). However at this time the panic of 1893 occurred, adding to the difficulties of those Mennonites who had over speculated in the previous years. When the Cherokee Strip opened in 1893, many of these Mennonites who did not own land and were bankrupt moved to Oklahoma. This was very similar to what occurred in Russia when many of the landless Mennonites moved to the Crimea to farm land because they were unable to acquire land where they were.

The overall landscape is much more organized now. There are few uncultivated fields left, the trees and hedges have grown to better delineate the farmsteads and roads. In most cases there is more land fenced rather than unfenced and barbed wire has become the predominant fencing material (State Agricultural Census of 1895, & 1905). Some farmers had a few acres in nursery in 1895 however by 1895, those are not accounted for in the agricultural census. Winter wheat, corn, rye and oats are still the main crops. Sorghum is now being grown more for seed rather than for domestic use. Alfalfa has become popular and replaced millet as a

forage crop. With an increase in acreage for crops, larger machines have become necessary. More horses were needed to pull the machines and this appears as an increase in horse ownership in the 1905 Agriculture Census. By 1905 many of the first settlers have retired and given or sold the farm to their children or to another Mennonite and are in the process of moving to town.

Although the Mennonites are raising more crops, the number of families per section remains high. There are usually five different families per section and in only one case are there only two families in a section (Standard Atlas of 1902). J. Friesen had bought all of Section 10 when he first arrived and then divided this land for his two sons. By the 1900's the two sons still remained on this land. In Section 11, where Gnadenau had been, there are five families left owning land.

The church was relocated in 1890, two miles south of Hillsboro and southwest of Gnadenau (Figure 4.22). Because of the breakdown of the village system, membership had shifted to the west. When the village was beginning to disperse, many of the farmers made their permanent homes on section 15, which is southwest of Gnadenau. The church shifted in the same direction, following the congregation or the congregation following the church. In 1874 the church

was situated in the center of the congregation. in 1877 it was moved to the west end of the village and by 1890 it was moved even farther west and to the south of Gnadenau.



Figure 4.22 . Relocation of the church in 1897 due to the movement of the congregation to the southwest.

In 1893 an orphanage was built behind the village proper for homeless children. Many children that were left homeless from the Chicago fire came to this orphanage and to some of the Mennonite homes. At one time there were 50 children in the orphanage (John Jost, personal communication, May 22, 1986). By 1899 the children were established in new homes and the orphanage was converted into a home for the elderly.

The course of the South Cottowood remains the same. Although the holdings have become larger, they are oriented in a north-south direction. Most of the farmers still have access to water on their land. The numerous tributaries and

the South Cottonwood itself, contributed to the landscape of this area. Because the farmers did not alter the streams and left trees along them, the overall landscape is one of cultivated fields with a curving dark green path through or on the edge of the fields delineating the path of the water through the area.

In the interviews with the descendants of the first settlers, the flower garden is still an important part of the farmstead in the 1900's. All of the informants remember the large flower gardens that their grandmother or mother had grown. In many cases the flower garden remained between the house and road, as it had been in 1875. Usually the large flower garden was fenced in by a picket fence if it was in front of the entrance of the house, otherwise it would have a wire fence around it. Usually the picket fence was only in front of the living quarters and separated the living area from the farmyard (Figure 4.23). A wire fence would be strung around the sides and back of the house.

The vegetable garden was either on the side or back of the house. Because the farms were still self-sufficient, the vegetable gardens remained large. Sometimes a vineyard would be planted near the vegetable garden (Figure 4.24). Mrs. Classen and John Block remembered the grape vines very

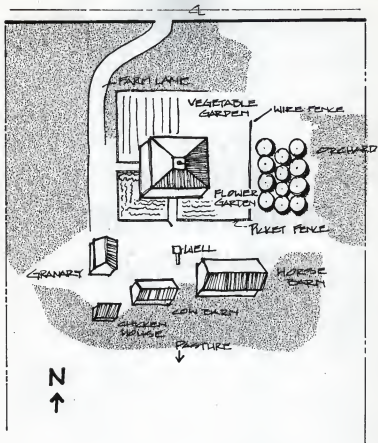


Figure 4.23 . The flower garden enclosed by a picket fence on the Frank Wohlgenuth farmstead.

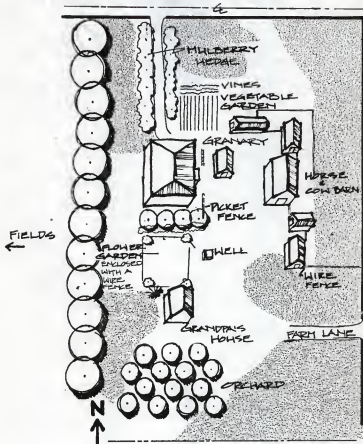


Figure 4.24 . On the farmstead the vineyard would be planted next to the vegetable garden as shown on the Jacob Friesen farmstead.

well and picking the grapes for wine and vinegar (Mrs. Classen, personal communication, April 21, 1986; John Block, personal communication, May 22, 1986). Large barrels would then be stored in the cellar and would last for many months.

The orchard had become part of the yard. Usually the orchard was to the side or back of the house between the neighbors yard (Figure 4.25). Mrs Classen and Mrs. Eppe talked about how the orchard separated their farmsteads and their neighbors (Mrs. J. Classen, personal communication, April 21, 1986; Mrs Eppe, personal communication, April 16, 1986). In 1874, the orchard separated the fields from the farmyard and now in the 1900's the orchard separates neighbors. Mulberry trees are still being grown as an orchard tree and being used as a hedge. Apple, cherry, peach, and plum trees are still popular to grow in the orchard.

Trees remain an important part of the farmstead. They are planted along the farm lane, the road and fields. Trees are also planted near the house in the yard for shade. Although trees were still planted along the boundaries of the farmyard and fields, there are now fences to keep the animals contained. The trees around the fields were not similar to the massive shelterbelts that were planted in the 1930's by the Forest Service (Wessel, 1969). The trees that

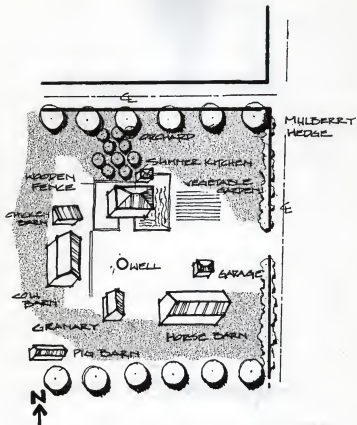


Figure 4.25 . The orchards would usually be planted to the back or side of the house. On John Friesen's farmstead the orchard was to the back of the house to the north, between his house and his neighbor's, Jacob Friesen.

were growing along the field edges in the 1900's supposedly kept the animals out, protected the crops, and helped to delineate the boundaries of the different fields.

The well remains near the house in the farmyard. Sometimes a trough would be connected to the well for the animals (Mrs. Eppe, personal communication, April 16, 1986). In addition to the horse barn, there is now a cow barn and chicken barn. Peter Schmidt of the Hochfeld Village had turned the shed, that was attached to the house, into a chicken house. The barn was sawed off from the house and moved north of the house and his grandmothers summer kitchen had been the attached house (Schmidt, 1985). However the people I interviewed had no recollection of any of the farm buildings on their farmsteads being converted and used for another purpose. The farm structures within the farmstead now include, the horse barn, the cow barn, the granary, the chicken barn, and sometimes there was a pig barn (John Friesen, personal communication, April 16, 1986). Also on many of the farms the summer kitchen was still used, which was usually situated near the outside door. With these additions, the farmyard had become more enclosed with hard structures. It has become an outside room with all other structural elements opening into it (Figure 4.26).

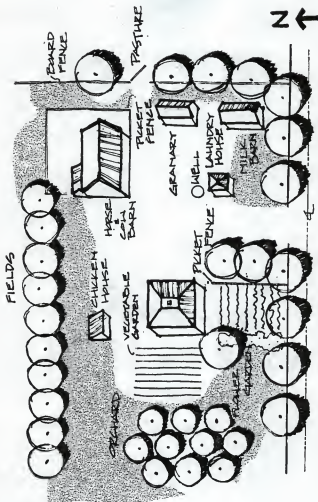


Figure 4.26. The Henry Block farmstead showing how the farm buildings and the other elements in the farmstead enclosed the farmyard.

Almost everyone now was building wood frame, two-story houses (see Figure 4.27). These houses were usually built in the exact same location of the old house and remained facing in, toward the farmyard, as the first houses had.



The home of Henry Block.
(courtesy of Mrs. Hodel)



Jacob A. Wiebe's home.
(courtesy of Mrs. Hodel)

Figure 4.27 . The popular two-story farmhouse.

It seems as though the Mennonites were placing more importance to the activities within the farm rather than what was occurring outside of the farm.

There is no longer a separation of front area, back area and rear. Instead of the farmstead being linear, it has become more centralized, with all elements oriented inward (Figure 4.28). In the 1800's this centralization had begun to occur when the barn, granary, and house had become separated. With the addition of other farm structures, this centralized form had become emphasized.

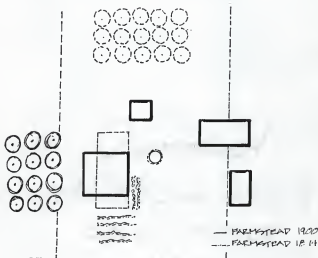


Figure 4.28 . Centralization of the farmstead through the years. The 1874 linear farmstead has been replaced with a rectangular farmstead by the 1900's.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Results of the Study

The Mennonites have been able to incorporate into their system that which works the best for the environment they are a part of. They learned to adapt to the landscape and to learn from it. When these German-Russian Mennonites arrived in Kansas, they immediately stopped using their ladder wagon or "Loda" wagon for it was not efficient in this new landscape. The threshing stone was also abandoned for the more efficient American farming equipment. The village system was impossible to maintain, due to the land-ownership policies and the inefficiency of travelling so far away from the home to cultivate the fields. Although they abandoned the village system, there was still a remnant of that community closeness. Most of the farmsteads were not far from each other, usually a small field or orchard separated the next farmstead. Also the numbers of acre per farm remained small. By 1905 there were still as many as five families or more on a section of land. Most farms maintained an average of 160 acres. The German-Russian Mennonites also maintained their heritage of crop diversity. They were willing to eliminate those crops that were not

economically feasible in order to productively compete with their neighbor. If a crop was discontinued however, it was usually replaced by a similar crop in order to continue diversity. Trees remained an important part of the farmstead. When one observes the photographs of early farmsteads, there are trees along the drives, in front of the house, and along the fields. Although the German-Russian Mennonites used wire for fencing by the late 1800's, they also kept the hedge rows as fencing as well as for delineating the fields.

Although in 1905 the German-Russian Mennonite farmstead in this area resembled many of the neighboring farmsteads, closer observation shows that some of the characteristics that were part of the farmstead in 1874 remained in 1905. The gardens and orchards that were important in 1874 remain a part of the farmstead in 1905. Flower gardens remained an essential part of the farmstead. Most of the farms in 1905 maintained large flower gardens that were well cared for. The house continued to face inward toward the farmyard and not to the road.

There are a number of buildings on the farmstead in 1905 instead of one or two buildings and none of them are connected. The barns do not maintain their north

orientation to the house. Instead, the barns are usually in an east-west direction. The granary is oriented to the farm lane and the public road. It was situated only for unloading and loading of grain in a more efficient manner. The wagons could drive straight through the building, stop, unload, then continue on out.

The linear form of the farmstead was lost almost immediately upon settlement in Kansas. When the barn and granary became separate from the house, the shape of the farmstead changed. The consolidation of the land also helped to change this shape of the farmstead. In 1905 the farmstead is wider, therefore the farmyard can expand in width. With the change in the shape of the farmstead, the separation of areas of the farmstead disappeared, along with the activities that occurred in those areas. There is no longer the front area, the back area, and the rear. The farmyard has become centralized. If one refers to Stilgoe's ideas on the *landschaft* (Stilgoe, 1982), it would seem that by 1905 the wilderness has been conquered. The land has been settled and the need for orderliness may not be as important. Defined areas of orderliness and activity do not need to be separated. The area is settled, therefore orderliness is all around the settlement. There is now a control of the environment and it is not something to be feared.

The German-Russian Mennonites were able to adapt to the Kansas prairie more easily than many of the homesteaders due to their adaptable nature. They were already accustomed to this prairie environment since they had moved from a similar environment. Also they had sent out delegates to study different environments and choose that which would best suit the community. Also the German-Russian Mennonites strong farming heritage was an advantage as well as their communal support. By helping each other and taking pride in their farmstead and their farming they have created a sense of place. They are able to accept ideas from non-Mennonites and put into practice some of those ideas if they are economically feasible and more efficient than their own ways. However, their heritage is farming and it is more than a job, it is a way of life. Wes Jackson (1984) wrote that a "good farmer will continue to look at a particular hillside and see what possibilities it offers in the total scheme of things, which includes his farm as a whole, its history, his family, and the aptitude of everyone in the family". Although these Mennonites moved away from the traditional village system, they still maintained the care and concern for the land as their ancestors had. They maintain the idea of being the custodians of the rural environment (Jenkins, 1985).

The dispersal of the village was caused by forces external to the German-Russian Mennonites and also by their philosophy of farming. The land was already surveyed in the rectangular pattern when the German-Russian Mennonites arrived in the United States. Land ownership made it almost impossible to continue a semi-communal system due to taxes on individual land. Also the improved technology in farming impacted the way of farming in the village. More land could be cultivated and it was faster to have ones own land close to the homestead. The German-Russian Mennonites pride themselves on being progressive farmers and they continued this idea by accepting the American farming technology and discontinuing their Russian farming tools. The railroad was also an important factor in the dispersal of the village. When the Marion-McPherson branch stopped in Hillsboro, the German-Russian Mennonites were exposed to newer technology in farm tools and they had more contact with non-Mennonite people. This contact with non-Mennonites also influenced the assimilation process of the Mennonites.

Summary

Preserving this area of Marion County would be very difficult and would not be feasible to a farming community. Although the Mennonites are interested in their heritage, very few remnants remain in the landscape to remind them of their ancestors. In order for the landscape to be

remembered, a farmstead that replicates the initial farm should be built at the museum where one of the first adobe houses is on display. Also a model, showing the changes in the farmstead should be displayed in the museum itself. This would enable the Mennonites to better understand what changes have occurred on the farm and how their ancestors settled on the land. When I began to talk with people about the farmstead, everyone was hesitant because they have never really thought about the farmstead as a means of explaining how they see themselves in the environment. Once they started talking about the farm most of the people interviewed became excited about noting the changes in the buildings and the orientation of different elements in the farmyard. Most of these people were raised on the farm but later moved into town. When someone becomes interested in their farm and the way in which all the elements related to one another, the people who lived on the farm become interested in the farm again. If there is a way for the younger people to become interested in the farm and the farming heritage of their ancestors, then maybe the pride in being a farmer may be brought back and the pride in the farming heritage, that was so important to their ancestors, may reappear.

Studying the settlement patterns of rural populations enables one to better understand how these people view

themselves within the total scheme of things. Very often planning is done without taking into account who the people are that one is planning for. This can lead to many misunderstandings between the planners and the inhabitants of the area. If research can be done on the group one is designing for and understand that group, then the entire design process can occur with less friction between groups and all parties can benefit.

Designers should also learn through the study of a group's settlement how these people have been able to survive in an environment and to prosper. If the group has been living in the area for many years, they have probably learned how best to deal with that environment they are in. Planners and designers should learn from these people and incorporate into the design those attributes of the group that have enabled them to adapt to their environment. To effectively design for people, one must observe those people and understand how they view themselves in the landscape and how they create their cultural landscape.

The study of a cultural landscape is also important so that the character of an area can be preserved. This preservation is for maintaining the character even though the area is developing. The changing process is an important part of the cultural environment, however that

change should remain within the character of the place. By the study of the cultural landscape of an area, new development can maintain that character of the landscape and the entire cultural landscape will retain its character.

Further Research

Further research should be done on the methodology used to recreate a settlement. I found myself using Robert Melnick's (1984) methodology for preserving historical places as a base for this study. Through the use of interviews, written documents, and maps, I was able to document what had occurred. However it would be beneficial to have a detailed step-by-step methodology for recreating a settlement that has completely disappeared.

Additional studies comparing the settlement of the German-Russian cultural landscape and other ethnic groups near them in the central Kansas region would be interesting. This would be helpful to understand if the various ethnic groups see themselves existing on the same physical landscape differently.

Another research topic would be the study of the relationship between the settlement and whatever is the nucleus of the town such as the church, town square, or school. I found in my study that the church and the congregation moved in the same direction. However I did not

research it any farther to discover if one was conducive to the other. It would be interesting to research the importance of that nucleus of the town to the solidarity of the group.

Cultural landscapes are an important part of our environment. Whenever people place an element in the landscape, it becomes a symbol for how people see themselves. Everyone creates a place and defines their position in the world. Everyone sees their place differently and these places will change with the needs of the person. To understand people, one must understand how people see themselves in the landscape and how their settlement will change with the changes in needs. The cultural landscape is a dynamic environment and it portrays the ever changing settlement process of people.

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MENNONITE SETTLEMENT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

All people consider their existence differently and that is manifested upon the natural landscape of which they dwell. They identify themselves in the landscape through the placement of concrete objects and it is the combination of these objects and the physical environment that makes a cultural landscape. Through the observation and recording of a continuum of land-use and landscape modification, one can observe changes in human beliefs, available technologies, and forces external to those cultural groups who are primarily responsible for the cultural landscape. Farming practices, architectural styles, and transportation systems, all change, reflecting the change in human needs and purposes.

This study analyzes the way in which a group of German-Russian Mennonites express their place in the Arkansas Valley of Central Kansas. The data was collected through archival research and interviews with the descendants of the early settlers. Through analysis of the farmstead layout, circulation, and the overall landscape a picture of the changes that occurred in the German-Russian Mennonite settlement in 1874 to the early 1900's becomes visible. By noting the changes that occurred within the settlement one can begin to understand how these German-Russian Mennonites view themselves in the landscape.

Studying the settlement patterns of rural populations enables one to better understand how these people view themselves within the total scheme of things. Through this understanding, one can then design more effectively for the group they are working with.